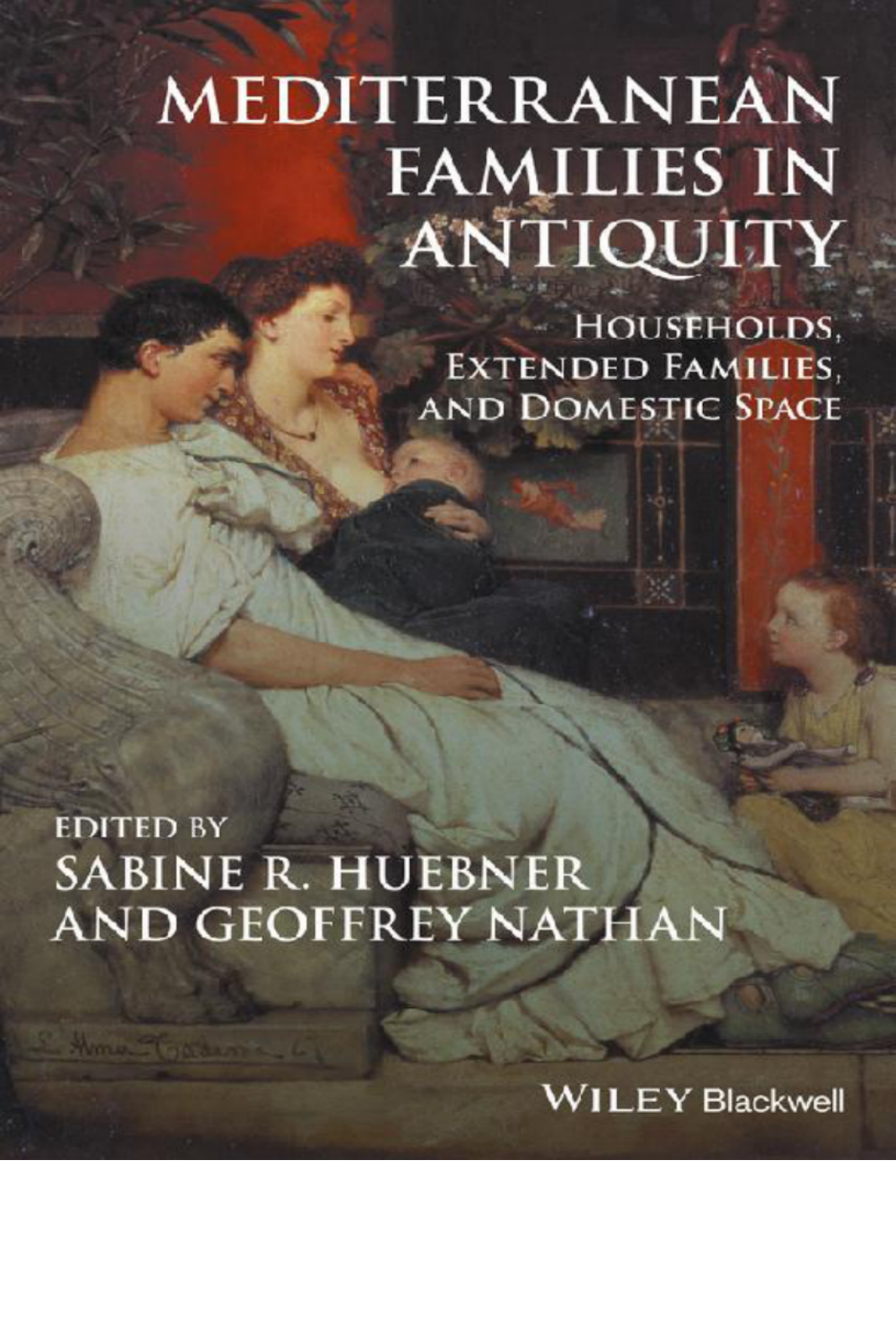


Mediterranean Families in Antiquity

**Huebner, Sabine R.; Nathan,
Geoffrey;
Geoffrey Nathan**

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MEDITERRANEAN FAMILIES IN ANTIQUITY

HOUSEHOLDS,
EXTENDED FAMILIES,
AND DOMESTIC SPACE

EDITED BY
SABINE R. HUEBNER
AND GEOFFREY NATHAN

WILEY Blackwell

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Mediterranean Families in Antiquity

Households, Extended Families, and Domestic Space

Edited by

Sabine R. Huebner and Geoffrey Nathan

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Foreword and Acknowledgments

In late 2010, in an online conversation, Sabine Huebner and Geoff Nathan were discussing the now classic 1984 article by Richard Saller and Brent Shaw, “Tombstones and Roman family relations in the Principate: civilians, soldiers and slaves” (*Journal of Roman Studies* 74: 124–56). Given challenges to its conclusions (and methodology) that the nuclear family model was predominant form of kin grouping in the Roman Empire, both Nathan and Huebner thought that issues of extended family versus the nuclear family and household might bear a broader examination in the pre-modern Mediterranean world.

From that initial discussion, a conference was held at the Max-Planck Institute for Demographic Research in Rostock, Germany on 14–15 June, 2012. The parameters of the conference were deliberately left broad: “The Mediterranean Family from Antiquity to Early Modern Times.” The 15 papers given were varied in terms of subject, methodology, source material, time period and geographical area.

When the organizers decided that the conference papers might be successfully turned into an edited volume, they substantially reorganized the nature of the studies. Less than half of the original papers from the conference remain in much expanded and edited form, and a number of new papers were commissioned to give the collection complete coverage of all major geographic regions in the Mediterranean. The decision was also to focus exclusively on the ancient world, from the early Iron Age to Late Antiquity. One of the major themes of the collection considers the so-called “Mediterranean Family” model as it functioned in antiquity. Hence the title of this collected volume. A broad range of specific topics and methodological approaches remain.

The editors would like to thank the Max-Planck-Institute for hosting the conference and sponsoring it with a generous grant.

We would also like to especially acknowledge several scholars who produced excellent material concerning the post-Classical Mediterranean family, but whose contributions could not be included due to a decision by the publishers that this volume should focus exclusively on the ancient world. It was an extremely difficult decision to make, especially since the quality of these papers were some of the strongest.

We would further like to thank those scholars whose contributions appear in

this volume. Their hard work and patience through the editing and production process has been the very example of scholastic collegiality.

Finally, our thanks go to the anonymous readers who provided much valuable advice regarding individual contributions as well the overall composition of the volume.

Sabine R. Huebner, Basel and Geoffrey Nathan, Sydney
25 October 2015

Part I
Introduction

A Mediterranean Family? A Comparative Approach to the Ancient World

Sabine R. Huebner
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The Family in the Mediterranean in Modern Times

In this volume we have brought together a group of scholars working on different periods and regions of the Mediterranean to study the family from the earliest historical periods of the Mediterranean to early medieval times spanning a time range from the second millennium BCE to the sixth century CE. This volume also offers an outlook on the family in later periods of the Mediterranean, which helps us to put our findings into perspective with better documented periods.

The family should be understood here as an evolving process, also called the family life cycle, comprising marriage, childbirth, death, and divorce. On the basis of the family and household we can study the organization of domestic space, gender relations, social representation, and small-scale economic activities along a continuum of the centuries and millennia. A house in this volume is defined as the physical building, while a household defines a group of individuals sharing a common dwelling, usually family members and their servants and/or lodgers. In a comparative approach taking into consideration the material, visual, and textual evidence for answering questions of cultural influence and social change, a study of houses and households as the core units of society we hope will eventually enhance considerably our knowledge of social organization in the ancient Mediterranean at large.

It is our view that the Greek and Roman worlds as pre-industrial societies were not fundamentally different from societies in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean, and we firmly believe that further comparative work on the Mediterranean family therefore would prove itself extremely fruitful in mending the academic fragmentation of a subject split between so many different disciplines. The study of the family life cycle and household formation patterns in cross-cultural comparative perspective has received surprisingly little attention by ancient historians interested in the family so far.

While a comparative approach is still unusual for traditional family studies of

Greek and Roman antiquity, it is intrinsic to the study of the family in Mediterranean communities of later periods. Studies of more recent years have increasingly stressed the region's variety and variability, testing and challenging the notions of geographical, historical, and cultural unity introduced by the founding fathers of Mediterranean anthropology. The French historian Fernand Braudel was one of the first who set out this concept of the Mediterranean world (Braudel 1949). Braudel thought he had discovered "an ancient substratum" in Mediterranean life that had remained unchanged since antiquity. His stress was therefore on continuity over the ages, on the one hand, and a certain homogeneity of the people around it, on the other. Seven years before the English translation of Braudel's *Méditerranée* appeared, another pioneering scholar of the Mediterranean based in Oxford, the anthropologist J. G. Peristiany, published parts of the proceedings of a conference under the title *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (Peristiany 1965). Like Braudel, Peristiany's writings fostered the perception of unity, proposing the concept of "Mediterranean modes of thought" central to the people around the Mediterranean Sea, such as the unifying ideas about "honor" and "shame" (cf. Peristiany 1976; Gilmore 1987).

The collection of essays *Mediterranean Countrymen*, edited by Pitt-Rivers in 1963, was one of the first in the field comparing social structures of rural communities in Spain, Egypt, Algeria, Greece, Corsica, Morocco, Lebanon, Turkey, and France. The contributions to this volume aimed to show that it was the geomorphological and climatic characteristics held in common by the Mediterranean regions, called "timeless" factors, that represented the source of Mediterranean unity. A similar climate with dry summers and torrential rainfall in winters, a mountainous rugged hinterland, the cultivation of olives, figs, vines, and wheat, transhumant pastoralism of goats and sheep, and the comparatively high degree of urbanization, with peasants residing in towns rather than in hamlets on their land, hypothetically favored a certain homogeneity of the region's people. Pitt-Rivers's aim in *Mediterranean Countrymen* was to "discover continuities which run counter to the varying political hegemonies, observing the exigencies of the ecology or the entrenched conservatism of the local settlement" (Pitt-Rivers 1963: 9–10) continuities that had been little affected by changing rulers or religious systems or borders of modern nation states.

Over the past few decades, however, a growing consensus in the scholarly community has rejected Braudel's, Peristiany's, and Pitt-River's view of the Mediterranean as a culturally homogeneous zone as an adequate model for studying the Mediterranean area in its historical and cultural context (e.g., Davis 1977; Gilmore 1982; Goitein 1983; Albera, Blok, and Bromberger 2001; Constable 2003; Harris 2005a). Horden and Purcell (2000) have been among the most recent to criticize Braudel's romanticizing characterization of

timeless Mediterranean life, while nonetheless trying to find some unifying concepts that distinguish the Mediterranean from other regions and unite the societies inhabiting its shores. *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, published in 2000, focuses on the time before that studied by Braudel, namely antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Horden and Purcell advance as unifying criteria the region's relatively easy seaborne communications and its fragmented topography of microregions (cf. for the manifold reactions to this volume Harris 2005b; Horden, and Purcell 2006; Purcell 2014). Did the climate, the region's distinct topography, and the modes of production provide the people around the sea with the same preconditions so that they produced the same responses? Was it the long history of commerce and conquests that made interactions inescapable over the millennia? Did the easy exchange of goods over the millennia lead to similar artistic styles and forms of expression?

In the same vein we might ask, interested as we are in the history of the family, whether similar topographic conditions and the continuous exchange of ideas have also produced similar concepts of marriage, attitudes to children, or intergenerational solidarity. Surprisingly, however, Horden and Purcell have nothing to say about the "family," even though the family was, according to Peristiany's later works, one of the central concepts of "Mediterranean modes of thought." Horden and Purcell are interested in ecological and economic matters – they note the impact of environmental factors on Mediterranean societies with regard to trade patterns and economic diversity – but they do not consider them for their impact on the family. In their review of Horden and Purcell's *The Corrupting Sea*, Elizabeth and James Fentress therefore rightly ask: "How can the authors discuss the anthropology of the Mediterranean without kinship, marriage, inheritance or social structure? It is like Mediterranean archaeology without pots or buildings" (Fentress, and Fentress 2001).

The classic Cambridge household classification system, developed by Laslett in the 1970s and improved and modified by later scholars, distinguishes between at least five different types of households (cf. Laslett, and Wall 1972; see also: Laslett 1983): first, solitary households consisting of just one individual; second, no-family households in which we do not find any conjugal or parental bonds between its residents (in historic times these were usually unmarried siblings residing together; contemporarily these will be flat shares); third, simple or nuclear family households in which a conjugal couple resides with or without their children; single-parent families also count as nuclear family households; fourth, nuclear families extended by an elderly parent residing with them; fifth, so-called multiple family households in which we find more than one conjugal couple, often the parent generation and a married son with his family. Daughters usually moved out and joined their husbands' parents' households. In agricultural societies across cultures and

historical periods we always find a high percentage of intergenerational co-residence because the requirements of farming the land provided the young and the old with numerous incentives to live together.

A special subtype of multiple-family households was the *frèreche*, where more than one son was married and all were living under the same roof. The explanation for joint family households is more complex than for intergenerational co-residence. An agricultural basis favored intergenerational co-residence, but in some regions it also favored the co-residence of several married brothers. We hardly find any evidence for joint families in historic northwestern Europe. In Southeast Asia, on the other hand, and also the Middle East, joint family households were very common until late into the twentieth century. Also in certain regions of early modern Italy, Greece, and southern France far into the nineteenth century we find a comparatively high percentage of joint family households consisting of several married brothers with or without the parent generation. Apart from this, combining two nuclear households saves money. The current economic crisis has led to an increase in more complex families in both Europe and the United States. However, for the ancient world the relationship between socioeconomic status and co-residence is not so simple. A characteristic of affluent landowning clans seems to have been residence in large multiple-family households, as we can see for instance for families in Republican Rome (Plut. *Aem. P.* 5, cf. *De fraterno amore* 478.1; Plut. *Crass.* 1; cf. Dixon 1992: 7, 232; Huebner 2010), Roman Egypt (Bagnall and Frier 2006; Huebner 2013, 2014), and medieval Tuscany (Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1978). Urban workers or craftsmen, however, lived in simple family households.

These different forms of household composition are not meant as alternatives but rather as stages in an ideal model of household progression. They all might be experienced by a single family over the course of several decades. Different types of household form – solitary, nuclear, extended, or joint – should be seen as phases in a cycle reflecting the age and reproductive status of its members. While Laslett's model helps as a tool for any comparative approach to the family, we need to be aware that real households were always a process rather than a norm. Household boundaries are fluid, defined by the everyday practices and relationships of their members and influenced by inheritance and marriage patterns, number of children, life expectancy, and forms of residence for the elderly (Hammel 1972, 1984: 31; Wilk and Netting 1984: 5; Wilk 1991; Burton, Nero, and Hess 2002; for the ancient world and particularly Roman Egypt, see Huebner 2013).

Moreover, in more recent years scholars have stressed the need to combine this purely quantitative approach with socio-anthropological interpretations and qualitative methods to investigate family systems in more depth and more accurately. Since quantitative data for classical antiquity are only available for Roman Egypt (see Huebner this volume, [Chapter 9](#): 155–6), this is exactly

what we need to do as well for the ancient family. Sacchi and Viazzo in their most recent overview of the study of the household in *A Companion to Mediterranean History* have therefore rightly stressed the lack of scholarship for the ancient period outside Roman Egypt and the need to turn to qualitative sources where epigraphic and papyrological evidence does not exist (Sacchi and Viazzo 2014: 239–41).

In 1983 Laslett proposed four different models of family and household formation in historic Europe: the “Western and North-Western,” the “middle European,” the “Eastern,” and the “Mediterranean” family (Laslett 1983). His suggestion to unify major areas of Europe under particular types of household formation has been vehemently disputed and condemned as inadequate by historical anthropologists, but nonetheless constitutes to this day the dominant framework for comparison (Kertzer 1991: 156; Sacchi and Viazzo 2014: 235). Laslett hereby extended the initial distinction between northern and eastern Europe of John Hajnal, originator of the so-called Hajnal line.¹ According to Laslett, the “Mediterranean family” pattern was dominated by larger, more complex household communities than, for instance, in Western Europe.² He saw the origins of this distinctive pattern in ecological factors, the widespread sharecropping system that favored large households forming an economic unit, but also in cultural characteristics of the societies in the Mediterranean, such as, for instance, the importance of “family honor” resting on the chastity of women and the accomplishments of men. Also typical for the Mediterranean type was, according to Laslett, early and near universal marriage for women, a considerable age gap between husband and wife, and patrilocal residence patterns for the young couple. By contrast, the family system that according to Laslett seems to have been widespread through the centuries all over northwestern Europe was characterized by nuclear household structures, few three-generational households, and high proportions of young people circulating between households as servants. It exhibited, however, no evidence for married brothers residing together. In northwestern Europe, men and women married only in their mid to late twenties, and the young couple usually set up their own independent household after marriage.

When proposing his model of the Mediterranean family in the early 1980s, though, Laslett mainly based his conclusions on studies conducted on the family in early modern Italy and southern France, for which most of the evidence was available at that time. Studies on the family in other regions of the Mediterranean have only been added later, even though mainland Italy has remained the central focus of family historians and anthropologists. For early modern times we now have numerous studies on northern, central, and southern Italy, Spain, and France, and also, even if considerably fewer, on the Balkans, Greece, and the Greek islands. Studies on the Ottoman and Arab family have been advanced as well, even though those are generally not treated as part of the Mediterranean cultural sphere (Ahlawat, and Zaghaf

1989; Al-Haj 1989; Tucker 1988, 1993). The family in societies on the eastern and southern coast of the Mediterranean, namely Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, or the Maghreb, has usually not been considered as belonging to the Mediterranean family type, but has been studied as part of the Middle Eastern world (for a discussion of Egypt's place in a larger Mediterranean, see Bagnall 2005). Current political circumstances, such as the rise of political Islam and the European Union, might have contributed to this division. In antiquity, on the other hand, Asia Minor and Syria no doubt belonged as much to the Mediterranean cultural sphere as did the Iberian peninsula, which justifies the debate about the concept of the Mediterranean as a cultural unit of the ancient world all the more.

In combination the results of all these studies contradict Laslett's model, blatantly showing considerable regional and local variety of family and household forms in the Mediterranean, ranging from almost exclusively nuclear households to a system of a high percentage of complex family households (Sacchi, and Viazzo 2014: 237). Especially for Italy and France regional differences have been well studied (Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1978; Barbagli 1984; Kertzer and Saller 1991; Cavaciocchi 2009). As Manfredini also stresses in a later chapter of this volume, central and northern Italy was characterized by complex family forms and multigenerational households, while the southern regions of Italy exhibited far more nuclear family structures (see also the chapters by Barbiera, Castiglioni, and Dalla Zuanna in this volume). Moreover, whereas postmarital residence in the northern and central regions was customarily patrilocal, in the south young couples usually set up their independent household. Age at first marriage for women was young. The differences in household structures are usually explained by different forms of landholding. In the south the peasants resided in towns, while in the central and northern parts of Italy they tended to live in hamlets on their land. Urban structures seem to have been everywhere more conducive to the nuclear family, whereas in rural settings we find a higher degree of multiple and extended families. However, within the same region stark differences have also been noted between social classes depending on economic circumstances. Wealthy landed peasants lived in more complex households, while the poor day laborers and landless population lived in simply structured households (Kertzer 1984; Herlihy 1985; Viazzo and Albera 1990). While in northwestern France the northwestern European family model prevailed, in Haute-Provence and the French Pyrenees people lived in complex households consisting of married siblings and their parents from at least the sixteenth to the early twentieth century, as Jenkins also demonstrates in his chapter in this volume (see also Shaffer 1982; Collomp 1983; Fauve-Chamoux 1987).

Reher has added a new dimension to the "Mediterranean family" pattern by his suggestion of a division of "strong" versus "weak" family links. In strong

families the community of the extended family has priority over the individual, and in weak family links the individual or conjugal couple has priority. While he finds the former mainly around the Mediterranean, weak families are predominantly found in the northwestern part of Europe (Reher 1998; cf. Micheli 2012). This reminds us of Goody's "Oriental" versus "Occidental family" structures (1983), the former being characterized by weak conjugal ties, strong ties with extended kin, strictly patrilineal descent lines, preference for endogamous unions, and dependence and subordination of females, while the latter exhibited more autonomy for the individual, marriage as a partnership, and a stronger stand for women (see also Goody 1990). However, do these models also hold up for antiquity? The example of Roman Egypt, at least where we find large households and a preference for endogamous marriages but on the other hand according to the law of the land more rights for women than anywhere else in the ancient Mediterranean (including the ability to adopt, act without a guardian, to inherit and to manage their property independently), sheds some doubt on the validity of Goody's and Reher's models of Orientalism vs. Occidentalism and collectivism vs. individualism (Huebner 2013). Egypt is of course a special case within the Mediterranean, often marginalized in Mediterranean history but indubitably belonging to the wider Mediterranean cultural sphere (cf. Bagnall 2005; Van De Mieroop 2005).

If we wanted to highlight a common tendency of all these studies published over the past 30 years since Laslett's article, it would be the stress on *regional diversity* of family and household structures within the Mediterranean. The idea of there being just one "Mediterranean family" clearly needs to be abandoned. Even within one region we do not find a homogeneous pattern of household composition: social and economic status of the household members, farming patterns, availability of farmland and building space, and the demographic environment seem to have influenced to a high degree the large variability of family forms and family systems in the modern Mediterranean (Reher 1998; Viazzo 2003). These findings have been further supported by the publications of micro-level studies documenting the existence of different family and household systems even within the same community, as is the case of villages in central Italy where the joint family system of sharecroppers coexisted with the strict nuclear one of daily laborers (Kertzer and Hogan 1989; Barbagli 1990; Viazzo and Albera 1992; Breschi, Manfredini, and Rettaroli 2000; Doveri 2000).

On the other hand, scholars have stressed the *longue durée* of certain household patterns and structural characteristics of the family within one locality unaffected by political hegemonies or religious systems, a stability of traditions that often can be traced from the Middle Ages up to World War I (see Hajnal 1983; Barbagli 1991; Hareven 1991; Kaser 1996; Mitterauer 1996; Reher 1998).

The Family in the Mediterranean in Antiquity

The number of studies advanced on the Greek and Roman family is immense; in fact, family history has been one of the most prolific areas of historical research over recent decades (for an overview see Dixon 1988, 1992; Rawson, and Weaver 1997; Gardner 1998; Rawson 2003b; George 2005; Huebner 2013: 14–15). Studies on the ancient family have used juridical, literary, medical, visual, archaeological, papyrological and epigraphic sources. More recently, the study of the family has received additional impetus from other disciplines such as gender studies, anthropology, comparative studies, and historical demography (for the impetus from other disciplines see Hopkins 1966; Sallares 1991; Scheidel 1996, 2001a, 2001b; Shaw 1996; Sallares 2002; Huebner, and Ratzan 2009; Huebner 2007, 2009, 2013). In the progression and refinement of the field, regional and cultural differentiations within the ancient Mediterranean – development over time, on the one hand, and continuity from pagan to early Christian times, on the other hand – have been stressed. Most studies have concentrated so far on classical Greek (Harrison 1968; Lacey 1968; Garland 1990; Golden 1990; Pomeroy 1997; Cox 1998; Patterson 1998; Nevett 1999; Schmitz 2007) and Roman families (Rawson 1986; 1991, 2003a; Dixon 1988, 1992; Bradley 1991b, 1991c; Corbier 1991; Kertzer and Saller 1991; Treggiari 1991; Saller 1994; Rawson and Weaver 1997; Gardner 1998; Evans Grubbs 2002; Severy 2003; George 2005; Dasen, and Spaeth 2010; Laurence, and Stroemberg 2012), with dominance on the Roman side, and here especially on the city of Rome, on Italy, North Africa, Gaul, and Spain. Works on family and kinship in the Eastern Mediterranean are still rare (for Ptolemaic Egypt: Thompson 2002; Vandonpe 2002; Clarysse, and Thompson 2006; for Roman Egypt: Huebner 2013; for ancient Israel: Cohen 1993; Bendor 1996; Perdue *et al.* 1997; also very informative for the Eastern Mediterranean is Krause 2003).

While studies on early modern Mediterranean societies have been based on census or parish registers, quantitative data that help us to establish household structure and family size are rare for the ancient world. We have, for example, household listings from Deir el-Medina from the second half of the second millennium BCE, a village for Egyptian workmen. From around the same time the Middle Babylonian tablets that record the public servile labor force at Nippur, use households as their registration unit. The information contained in these cuneiform tablets masterly studied by Tenney allows us to identify the demographic composition and family and household organization of this population group (Tenney 2012). Further, a collection of tablets known as the “Harran census” has come down to us from late eighth/early seventh-century Assyria, in which the heads of all households, their family members, landholdings, animals, and all other property were recorded. Most of the

individuals recorded were common people, farmers, gardeners, and shepherds, and average household size was four.

The Ptolemaic census, in operation at least from the reign of Ptolemy II, also seems to have been based on the household as declaration unit. The declarant gave the names of all members of his/her household, their gender, and their relationships to each other. In contrast to the later Roman census in Egypt, ages were, however, only infrequently supplied. Censuses were also held by the Romans from early republican days and later extended as well to the provinces that became part of the empire. We are best informed about the census of Roman Egypt, conducted at a 14-year interval from at least 11/12 CE to 257/8 CE, for which nearly 400 individual census returns have survived among the papyrological evidence (cf. Bagnall and Frier 2006; Huebner 2013; Claytor, and Bagnall 2015). Because of unequal preservation, most of the returns date to the second century CE and come from the Arsinoite and Oxyrhynchite nomes of Middle Egypt. These returns record all residents of Egypt, most of them ordinary people, such as farmers, laborers, soldiers, weavers, doctors, goldsmiths, gardeners, stonecutters, donkey-drivers, and their families.

Moving away from strictly classificatory approaches that are impossible to pursue due to a lack of quantifiable data for the ancient Mediterranean world, apart from Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt, and in addition have proven problematic for more recent periods of Mediterranean history, let us consider some further qualifying factors reaching beyond the household walls, such as political circumstances, economic and ecological determinants, kinship systems, religious beliefs about the family, gender systems, and last, but not least, temporal stability versus variability. We have to stress here once more, however, that the available source material on which we can base any assumptions about the ancient and early medieval family is very disparate, ranging from only poetry and scant archaeological evidence for Early Iron Age Greece to detailed census lists from Roman Egypt, rich archaeological evidence from later Roman Ephesus, prosopographical material for late antique Gaul, to extensive legal sources for the Byzantine Empire. The available sources for each region and time period limit the range of aspects we can analyze, and so it will be impossible to answer the same questions for all regions of the Mediterranean under study in this volume.

Household size and form

Owing to the scarcity of direct evidence, assumptions about household forms in the Roman Mediterranean have mainly been made on the basis of literary, archaeological, and epigraphic evidence (Roman West: Saller and Shaw 1984. Roman West in Late Antiquity: Shaw 1984. Roman Asia Minor: Martin 1996.

Roman Lusitania: Edmondson 2005). The problem with the latter has been that often family ties mentioned in funerary inscriptions were taken too closely as the reflection of actual co-residence patterns (for the problems of defining the meaning of *familia* and *domus* in a legal and colloquial sense, see Bradley 1991b: 4; Saller 1994: 75–6, 81–2, 91–4; Gardner 1998). An analysis of the epigraphic evidence from early imperial Italy, for instance, led Saller and Shaw (1984) to conclude that the nuclear family was the most prevalent family type in the Roman world. The problem with any study of epitaphs is that funerary texts are governed by certain conventions and commemorative patterns, and we do not know how these patterns relate to actual real-life conditions (see Bryce, and Zahle 1986: 115; Hope 1997: 113–14; Bodel 2001: 38). While many scholars followed Saller and Shaw and adopted and generalized their view that the Roman family was predominantly nuclear (Dixon 1988: 9; Gallivan, and Wilkins 1997: 240; Nielsen 1997: 172; Treggiari 2005: 376; Parkin, and Pomeroy 2007: 74), others have emphasized the shaky grounds on which these claims about actual household structure have been made (Phang 2001: 180–1; George 2005: 2; Gagos, and Potter 2010: 54; Huebner 2010, 2013).

Moreover, the studies mentioned above on the family in later periods of the Italian peninsula should make us very cautious that anything like the “Roman family” existed at all. By 1992 Bagnall was criticizing the point that, in the thriving study of the Roman family, the second part of the compound, “family,” had been carefully analyzed, while the first part, “Roman,” was treated as a too self-evident category that was never as carefully considered in its complexity (Bagnall 1992: 181). The “Roman aspect” usually always included the city of Rome, sometimes also Italy, sometimes even the Western provinces, and due to its rich sources occasionally even Egypt in Roman times. However, should we not expect to find enormous variations between regions just within Italy, not to speak of the other provinces of the Roman Empire? Comparative evidence suggests that we will find a family pattern for the elite senatorial family and another one for the working class of Rome, yet another family pattern for the olive-tree farmers in northern Lazio, and others for the dairy farmers in Etruria, the fishermen of Neapolis, the craftsmen of Pompeii, the great landowners of Sicily, the donkey drivers in Roman Egypt, and so on. Urban or rural environment, the economic basis of the household, social class, inheritance practices, and demographic conditions such as average life expectancy and age at first marriage determined household composition and must have produced a great variety even within the same region. Keegan stresses in his chapter in this volume that “manifestations of family in the Roman world in fact differed greatly.” Furthermore, as Noy points out in his chapter in this volume, migration could also strongly affect family and household composition and could differ considerably from the traditionally expected family pattern at the migrants’ region of origin or their new home.

From studies by family historians, sociologists, and social anthropologists on societies of early modern and modern periods, we know that composition and size of household depended on the economic basis on which the family made its living, because different forms of property and economic activities required different kinds of labor. In regions with low population density and abundance of land, neolocality was common and young couples established their own households upon marriage. In those areas where land was scarce there was a tendency to form complex households with several generations living under one roof. The fact that exigencies rarely changed with time or political rulers, afforded family forms some regional continuity. We have several attempts in this volume to trace family forms over time in specific regions of the Mediterranean, such as Varto in her chapter on Early Iron Age Greece or Schwaiger for the city of Ephesus from 7000 BCE to 700 CE. Moreover, across time and place families that were smaller and simpler in organization have been observed for day laborers, small traders, craftsmen, and fishermen, whereas peasant farmers usually lived in larger, more complex families because they needed a sufficient pool of labor to meet peak periods of labor demand (Pasternak 1972; Cohen 1976; Viazzo, and Albera 1990). In societies where partible inheritance was the rule, that is, where all sons inherited a share of the patrimony, married brothers often preferred to continue living and farming their land together even after their parents' death in order to prevent the division of their paternal land (Meriwether 1999; Cuno 2005). Among the urban lower classes, on the other hand – the small traders and craftsmen – multiple family households made less sense. Those families that were unable to generate surplus property and lacked inherited property had little reason to stay together; multiple family households might even have been more difficult to maintain because of restricted living space in the cities (Barbagli 1991: 257; cf. Lemaître 1976; Shaffer 1982).

Marriage patterns

What seems to unite the societies around the Mediterranean Sea in premodern times is their family system that, by contrast to the modern Western family model centering on the conjugal couple, favored the patrilineal descent group (cf. Hellerman 2001). Several chapters of this volume stress the importance accorded to patrilineal organization of the family regardless of whether we are looking at Greece, Roman Gaul, or Egypt (Varto, McHardy, Nathan, Huebner). Sons were central to the success and continuation of the family; the bloodline could only be passed on by male offspring. A daughter belonged to her father's patriline, but the bloodline ended with her. Her role was to bear children, and above all sons, in her husband's household, who would continue their father's bloodline. If a father had no sons but only daughters, his family died out with the next generation – unless his brothers had sons.

Marriage patterns for men and women are an important factor in analyzing household structure because age at first marriage is closely linked with the onset of childbearing. Moreover, age at first marriage, especially for women, is often heavily influenced by social norms, such as the importance attributed to bridal virginity, the educational background of the woman, urbanization, and social class. The age of the young couple therefore also has implications for the organization of family life and for the relations between the generations and men and women in the household. As far as the evidence goes, women seem to have married considerably older men in all ancient societies around the Mediterranean. In early imperial Rome, women married in their mid-teens, while men were already in their late twenties when they first tied the knot (Shaw 1987; Scheidel 2007). Among the elite, age at first marriage seems to have been on average even a bit lower than in the sub-elite strata. In Classical Athens the usual ages to wed seem to have been for young women the mid-teens and for young men the late twenties or early thirties. In Sparta alone women were probably a bit older, in their late teens or early twenties when they married a man who was somewhere in his twenties. Unfortunately, we know next to nothing about the other Greek city states, since most of our sources are concerned with Athens. From the papyrological evidence from Roman Egypt we know that men were on average around 25 when they first married, while their spouses were about eight years younger than them (Bagnall, and Frier 2006: 111–18).

Postmarital residence patterns

An important factor that also influenced the structure and size of the household was the decision of a young couple about where to start their new life together, a decision that seems to have been heavily governed by social expectations and cultural patterns. Forms of postmarital residence in the non-elite strata are touched on in this volume by Day for Minoan Crete, Huebner for Middle and Upper Egypt in Roman times, and LaFosse for early Roman Asia Minor. While the elite often diverged from these residence patterns, among the common population in traditional societies we often find the patrilocal pattern, while the most common form of postmarital residence in the contemporary Western world is certainly the neolocal pattern. According to the first, the young bride joins her groom in his parents' household, and children born are added to this household. According to the second, the neolocal pattern, the young couple establish an independent household upon or soon after their wedding. The result of the former is a high percentage of extended and multiple family households, while under the latter most households are simple. We know that in Rome in the first few centuries CE, at least among the elite, neolocality was the rule. A newly married couple established their independent household; children did not grow up with their

grandparents in the same household (Saller, and Shaw 1984). Among the common population at least in the Eastern provinces marriage was regularly patrilocal (see LaFosse on the Eastern provinces in Roman times, and Huebner more specifically on Roman Egypt). Men had lifelong membership in the family into which they were born, whereas females were only temporary residents of their natal families' households and joined their husbands' families at marriage, when they then took up disadvantaged membership. Co-residence was restricted to patrilinear kinship and females marrying into the family. Despite these postmarital arrangements favoring the husband's parental home, efforts were made to afford the bride some continuity of relationships by marriage within the same village or even same family to a cousin or other close relative.

While in societies with simple family household patterns marriage is usually late, as the couple can only establish an independent household and start having a family once the necessary means to do so have been acquired, where the multiple family household was common marriage could take place earlier. As marriage in such a system did not require any savings on the part of the young couple or the transfer of the estate from father to son, marriage must have been possible at any point, whether or not the groom was already financially independent. For this reason also more three-generational households were possible than in societies, such as classical Athens, where sons had to wait until their fathers around their sixtieth birthday transferred the headship and patrimony to them. In general, the observed pattern of multiple family households goes together with the similarly noted early age at first marriage and nearly universal marriage for both sexes. Divorce seems to have been easy to obtain for both sexes and usually did not generate any social disdain.

Some men even in patrivorilocaly orientated societies must have married into their brides' families, thus making an uxorilocal marriage. The few recorded instances, for example in the census returns from Roman Egypt, show that especially men from an impoverished family background considered this option (Bagnall and Frier 2006: 57–74; Huebner 2007, 2013).

Postmarital residency also had an effect on children from previous unions. Usually children stayed in their paternal household when their parents divorced. A new marriage of their father had no effect on their place of residence. Children whose fathers had died stayed with their mother in their paternal household, or if the mother remarried, with their father's family. Mothers rarely brought their children into a new marriage and into the house of a stepfather (cf. Huebner 2009).

Non-kin as household members

Another important aspect to consider is the presence of non-family household members, such as domestic or agricultural servants, slaves, lodgers, or apprentices who spent anything from a few weeks to a couple of years or their entire lifetime with the family of the household. Slaves seem to have played a rather negligible role in households below the social elite in the Roman world. While the Roman elite household of Rome or Pompeii or the great landowners' estates of Roman Italy would have been unthinkable without a numerous slave population, households of for example the Roman Egyptian middle and lower classes seem to have owned at most one or two, and then mainly female, slaves. The employment of slaves for working the land seems to have been negligible for non-elite households around the ancient Eastern Mediterranean. Slave-run plantations owned by the aristocratic elite were rare in the Roman East, and slavery was never a substantial factor in production or labor organization for the majority of the population (cf. Culbertson 2011).

In many early modern societies of northwestern Europe but also in some regions in the early modern Mediterranean we see that a considerable number of young adults in their early to mid-teens left their parental home and entered service in another household which was not necessarily of higher social status. These young people stayed in service for a couple of years, but not longer than their mid-twenties, and then returned home or married and established their own independent household. Their master or mistress was expected to feed and clothe them during the period of their service and teach them some skills. However, while in northern Europe between 30 and 55 percent of all young adults between 15 and 24 years of age were servants, only between 5 and 20 percent of young adults in southern Europe entered service in another household (cf. Reher 1998: 206). Moreover, in the southern European regions these so-called "life-cycle servants" were predominantly males. A stronger emphasis on female honor in these societies is usually adduced as the explanation as to why young females could not enter service in another household.

At first glance this institution of life-cycle servants seems unfamiliar to the ancient world, but we do also find such servants in the ancient Mediterranean. Dixon published an insightful article on the circulation of children in the Roman world in which she discusses the mobility of children between families (Dixon 1999). Bremmer advanced a study on the circulation of children in the Greek world in the same year (Bremmer 1999). The institution of apprenticeship of adolescents that we know best for Roman Egypt thanks to the papyrological evidence can also be regarded as life-cycle service (cf. Westermann 1914; Brewster 1917; Herrmann 1958; Bradley 1991a; van Minnen 1998). Farmers and artisans sent their own children to other peasants or artisans to help them out or let them learn a trade, while hosting themselves other families' children in their household (see e.g., Bradley 1991a: 109). They would live there, be fed and clothed, and be treated like a member of the

family. After a few years they would return home with the skills they had acquired.³

Discussing non-kin as household members, we also need to consider here those households that were formed entirely without the nucleus of a biological family, but rather by non-related individuals who remodeled traditional family bonds and household patterns, such as the firefighters in Ostia and the Roman capital and apprentices to service in the Palatine palace, discussed by Keegan in this volume, or recently arrived settlers in their new place of residence, as set out in Noy's chapter.

Another interesting phenomenon that upends the usual definition of households as focal points of preparing and sharing meals is proposed by Schwaiger in this volume when discussing Ephesian elite houses of the third century CE. Most of the rooms of accommodation unit 6, for instance, a city palazzo of the second or third century with 950 m² floor space, served representative purposes. Basically no room has been detected that clearly functioned as a place for food storage and processing. However, kitchens with storage facilities centrally located between different houses have been discovered that clearly were shared by several elite households. Furthermore, numerous receipts for take-out food from neighboring cookshops carved into the wall plaster of these houses stress the low significance attributed to domestic meal preparation and potentially even sharing of meals among household members.

Living arrangements of the elderly

While in modern nuclear families older individuals live in an ever-shrinking household as their children grow up and move out, in the multiple family households of patrilocal societies all of the couple's sons usually stayed in the parental household even after marriage, repopulating the household with their spouses and children. Growing old thus did not entail isolation, but quite the contrary. The number of family members in the household ideally increased as the parents entered old age. A cultural norm of age hierarchy protected the elderly within their households (see LaFosse's chapter in this volume), emphasizing again the life cycle of the family and household and the continuously evolving roles and standings of its members. Both daughters and sons were involved in the support of their elderly parents, even if to different degrees and in different ways. Forms of support varied between financial, practical, and emotional support and depended on the respective living situation and the child's economic and physical capability.

However, joint family households headed by the old patriarch were not the norm in all parts of the Greco-Roman world, though in many studies on old age and the elderly in ancient societies little attention has been paid to actual

living arrangements.⁴ In the classical period laws existed in many Greek city states that compelled children to care for their parents in the latter's old age (Vitruvius 6, *pr.* 3; cf. Richardson 1933; Garland 1985; David 1991; Falkner 1995), an indication that other than in Rome the patrimony was transferred during one's lifetime, which left the elderly without resources and dependent on the goodwill of their children in their last years. In Greek mythology and literature we meet several old men who had given up power while alive: so, for instance, the elderly Philokleon from Aristophanes' *Wasps*, who shared a household with his son dependent on his son's care and upkeep.⁵ In the Roman world, however, the patriarch stayed in power until his death (Parkin 1997; Harlow, and Laurence 2002; Cokayne 2003; Parkin 2003).

To avoid these troubles between retired parents and adult children, elderly parents with sufficient means sometimes moved into a separate house on the family estate when they retired and left the main house and land to one of their children, who then also had the responsibility to maintain and support them in their old age (Berkner 1972; Moring 2003). We know this pattern from across much of early modern Europe and also have examples from the ancient world, for instance from Euripides' *Alcestis*. The elderly parents of King Admetus had already handed over the throne to their son, but had kept parts of the patrimony to themselves. Likewise, the elderly Laertes, father of Odysseus, was farming his retirement portion while his son had already succeeded him as king of Ithaca.

LaFosse's analysis of the early Christian texts comes to the conclusion that the Christian community functioned in relationship like household members do, as fictive or pseudo-kin. Age served as one of the most important markers of status within society and within the family: "a younger person owed deference to his or her elders, and an older person normally earned precedence with age," as LaFosse puts it (p. 206, footnote 9).

A number of further factors come to mind that have an effect on the life cycle of a family household. Tightly connected with the living arrangements for the elderly are the prevalent inheritance and succession patterns in a society.⁶ We find a wide range of inheritance patterns for the ancient and modern Mediterranean ranging from primogeniture (i.e., the first-born son inheriting everything) to partible inheritance where all children, sons and daughters, received equal shares. The division of the paternal estate had of course a direct influence on household composition, leading to rather nuclear structures in the former and joint-brother households in the latter case. Another factor is the dichotomy between rural and urban life. One of the characteristics of early modern and modern Mediterranean life is the settlement of even the peasant population in villages or small towns instead of on scattered farms in the countryside. This seems to hold true also for ancient times: in particular the Roman period is characterized by an unprecedented urbanization rate in Italy and especially the Eastern provinces of the empire (Halstead 1987; Pleket

Conclusions

If we want to get a deeper understanding of the inner workings of ancient family life, it is inevitable that we also start examining which internal and external factors had an influence on the life cycle of the household. The house itself often served as a metaphor for the family unit, its reproduction, identity, and continuity. In our opinion, we cannot understand Greek or Roman family life without knowing and understanding their general household formation pattern, which indubitably varied from region to region and was closely interrelated with the political system, the demographic environment, the geographical and geological context, landholding patterns, migration intensity, inheritance systems, marriage practices, postmarital residence patterns, the status of women, and the forms of care for the elderly and other vulnerable members of the family. By understanding the context of ancient household and family life, we might even get a better understanding of these ancient societies in general, their economic mechanisms, cultural patterns, and social norms.

So far nothing that comes close to a map of family forms in the ancient Mediterranean exists, even though the evidence is available to allow for such an approach. This volume aims to be a starting point to create such a map, expanding our knowledge about the history and development of the “Mediterranean family” – or should we say “Mediterranean families” – an endeavor that will benefit not only ancient family historians but also scholars who study the family and household in much later periods of the Mediterranean world, trying to come to grips with the origins of the family forms they observe in their respective locality and period of time under study.

Chapters of this volume cover the entire classical Mediterranean from Bronze and Iron Age Spain (Ayán) and Crete (Day) to Archaic (Varto) and Classical Athens (McHardy), Hellenistic Delos (Noy), Roman Italy (Keegan), Roman Asia Minor and Syria (Schwaiger, LaFosse), Roman Egypt (Booser, Huebner), Roman and Byzantine Africa (Haase and Steinacher), later Roman Gaul (Laes and Vuolanto, Nathan), to later Roman Syria (Nathan), and a diachronological study by Barbiera, Castiglioni and dalla Zuanna on female burials from the first to the fifteenth century. Finally, Manfredini’s overview of demographers’ approaches to family forms in the early modern and modern Mediterranean serves as an outlook to later much better documented and studied periods of Mediterranean family history.

Contributors have not only considered a wide geographical area and time

range but used an extensive array of sources and methodological approaches as well to study the family in the Mediterranean. The volume offers studies on the archaeological evidence for domestic space of sub-elite strata for Bronze and Iron Age Spain and Crete, Roman Egypt, and Roman Asia Minor the epigraphic evidence has been fruitfully used for Hellenistic Delos, Roman Italy, and Roman Northern Africa, and the papyrological evidence for Greco-Roman Egypt. Further, osteological data from a time span of 1,500 years of Mediterranean history complement the usual array of sources employed to learn about historic family and household composition. Aspects of family life and household composition in Archaic and Classical Athens, later Roman Gaul, and later Roman Syria are studied on the basis of literary and legal evidence. Literary sources, generally at the center of attention in any historical study, however, take almost a marginal role in this volume, considering their nearly exclusive focus on the elite strata of the population and our aim to consider above all the majority of the population, the peasant farmers, small merchants, and craftsmen in the many villages and towns of the ancient and early medieval Mediterranean world. Most contributors fall back on theories developed outside the proper classical canon, such as anthropology, demography, and sociology. All of them stress, however, the variety and variability of family and household forms, thereby dismissing any effort to find a Mediterranean or even Greek or Roman family as futile.

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Notes

- 1 Hajnal 1965 drew a line running from northeast to southwest from St Petersburg to Trieste, thereby dividing Europe into two areas of different marriage patterns. The western area was characterized by comparatively late age at marriage for women, close spousal ages, and a considerable

percentage of adults who never married. East of Hajnal's line, women married at a much younger age, the age gap between spouses was greater, and marriage was nearly universal for men and women. Later scholars have stressed regional variations within these two broad areas but have not entirely disputed the validity of his theory.

- 2 For the importance paid to Laslett's model by scholars of the family working on the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, see Sacchi, and Viazzo 2014: 235.
- 3 Van Minnen argues that we find only very few freeborn females among the apprentices because "parents of freeborn females of marriageable age preferred to keep them at home, to keep them from losing their virginity." This does not mean that freeborn women did not learn or practice a trade; they just learned it at home (1998: 201).
- 4 Ancient Near Eastern societies: Stol and Vleeming 1998. Greek society: Richardson 1933; Garland 1985; David 1991; Falkner 1995; Baltrusch 2003; Huebner 2005. Greco-Roman world: Bertman 1976; Finley 1981; Falkner, and de Luce 1989, 1994; Mattioli 1995; Brandt 2002; Gutsfeld, and Schmitz 2003; Schmitz 2007 (including Sparta!); Timmer 2008; Schmitz, and von Prittwitz 2009. Roman society: Harlow and Laurence 2002; Cokayne 2003. Greco-Roman Egypt: Rupprecht 1998. For late antiquity: Gilleard 2007; Amerise 2008.
- 5 Cf. above with the evidence for more nuclear family structures among the Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt than in the indigenous population.
- 6 For inheritance and succession in the ancient and medieval Mediterranean, see now Caseau, and Huebner 2014.

Part II

The Greek and Hellenistic World

Identifying Family Structures in Early Iron Age Crete

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Introduction

It is difficult enough to determine family structure in the ancient Mediterranean even when literary and documentary evidence exists and can be combined with material remains. For those cultures without written evidence, however, it becomes still harder, not the least because there are inherent dangers in identifying family structure based solely on archaeological evidence (Boozer, this volume). Nevertheless, unless we are willing to remain completely in the dark about family arrangements or kinship structures for non-literate cultures, we must find approaches to archaeological evidence that allow us glimpses into the family. I will argue that an analysis of architectural remains together with artifacts can suggest family structures, although the information cannot be as detailed or nuanced as that which exists for societies that provide written testimony. The site of Vronta, Kavousi in eastern Crete will provide a case study for using archaeological evidence for the Bronze and Early Iron Ages on the island of Crete.

The Evidence from Vronta, Kavousi

Kavousi lies in the mountains at the northeast edge of the Isthmus of Ierapetra in eastern Crete, overlooking a small plain that stretches to the sea and guarding mountain passes into the far eastern end of the island ([Figure 2.1](#)). Three sites have been excavated (Boyd 1901; Gesell, Day, and Coulson 1983, 1986, 1988, 1995; Gesell, Coulson, and Day 1991): on the ridge at Vronta (Day, Glowacki, and Klein 2000; Day, Klein, and Turner 2009; Day and Glowacki 2012; Day *et al.* 2016), on the high peak of the Kastro (Gesell, Day, and Coulson 1985; Coulson *et al.* 1997; Mook and Coulson 1997; Mook 1998, 2004, 2011), and on the lower peak at Azoria (Haggis *et al.* 2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2011a, 2011b; Haggis and Mook 2011). While the three Kavousi sites had differing histories, they overlapped during the twelfth and early eleventh centuries, a period of transition on the island after the collapse

of the palatial societies of the Bronze Age and before the rise of the Greek city-state. Only at Vronda, however, was the majority of the twelfth-century settlement revealed; at the other Kavousi sites remains of this period have been found beneath later structures, so that full plans of buildings or of settlements have not been recovered or are still unpublished. At Vronda no occupation occurred after the final abandonment of the buildings, only later burials that disturbed some of the assemblages but left the architecture intact.

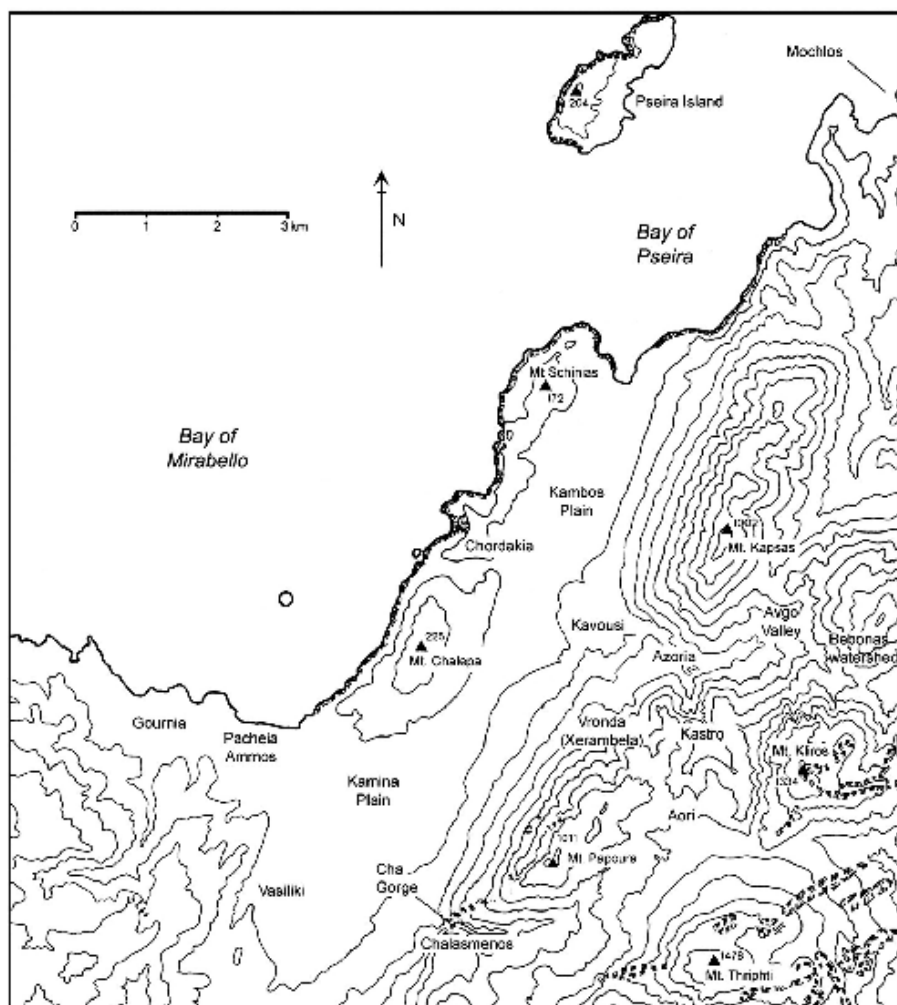
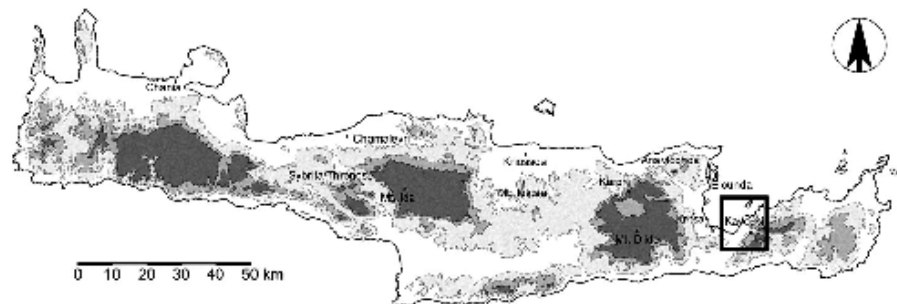


Figure 2.1 Map of Crete and topographic map of Kavousi Region (based on plan by K. T. Glowacki).

Vronta is a small settlement belonging to the Early Iron Age on Crete (ca. 1175–1050 BCE) with a number of domestic units, along with a religious

building, and an elite structure on the summit (Figure 2.2). Because most of the architecture and finds belong to a single period of time, the site provides evidence for the growth of the community and for the activities of its people.

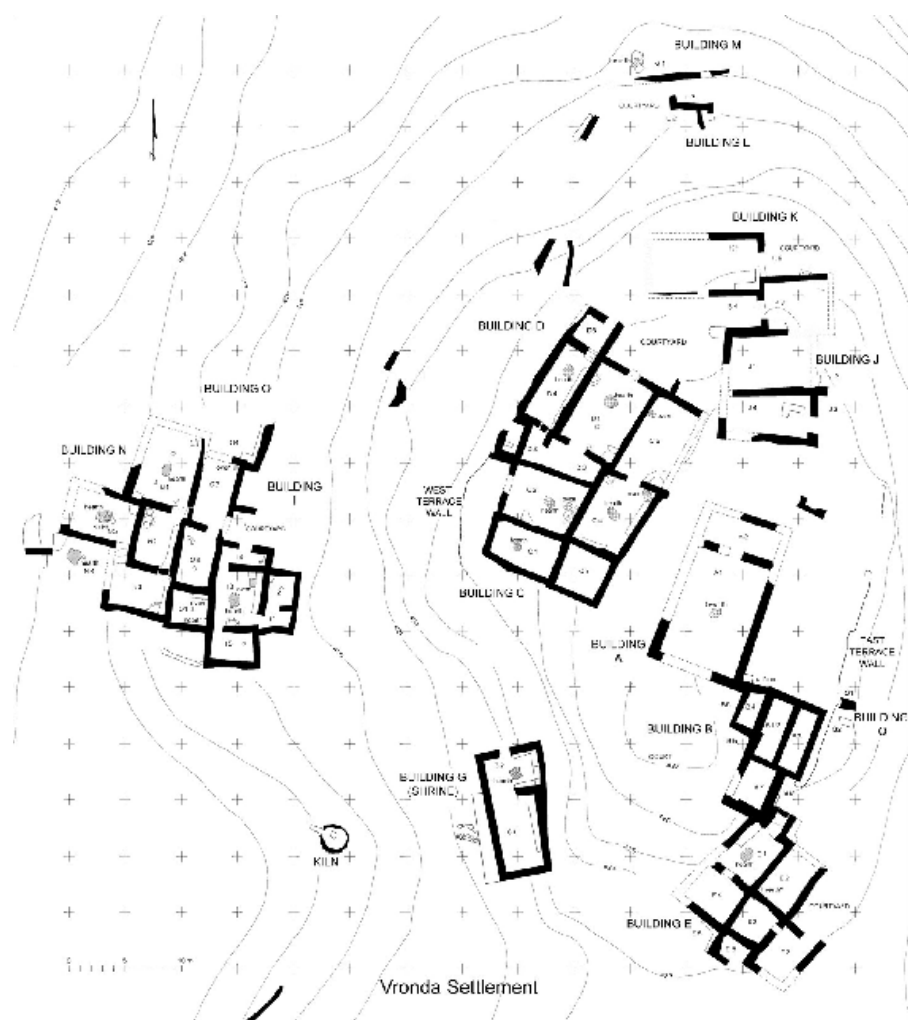


Figure 2.2 Plan of the twelfth-century settlement at Vronda, Kavousi (by K.T. Glowacki).

The settlement is made up of clusters of buildings on the summit and slopes of the Vronda ridge. Most of these buildings are domestic in nature (Building Complexes C-D, E, I-O-N, J-K, and L-M), but one is industrial (a potter's kiln) and two are communal or public: Building G, a shrine, and building A-B, a ruler's dwelling or communal dining center.¹ The domestic clusters are agglutinative. Within each cluster, individual houses can be identified because the rooms in the houses are generally on the same level and/or are connected by doorways. The sequence of building can be determined by attention to the bonding and abutment of walls. New constructions within each complex

utilized an existing wall from an earlier building, and their cross walls abutted against this wall. Generally a new construction was laid out on a lower terrace, and the use of terraces going downslope meant that buildings tended to be long and rectangular. Each house had from one to five rooms, depending on needs, but always included one larger room with a central hearth that served as a focus for cooking and socializing; often these hearth rooms had other built features, such as benches, ovens, bins, and platforms. When a new building was constructed, it replicated the major features of the earlier building, particularly the inclusion of a large room with central hearth.

Building Complex I-O-N represents the clearest example of this pattern of growth, which is also seen in Building Complexes C-D and E (Glowacki 2002, 2004, 2007; Glowacki and Klein 2011; Day and Glowacki 2012). The original structure was a three-room building (Rooms I3-I4-I5) facing on an open courtyard. Rooms I1 and I2 were added at a later date. At some point, a new structure (Building O) was constructed on a lower terrace to the west of Building I, utilizing the western wall of Building I. Building O was originally a two-room structure (Rooms O1 and O2), with a hearth in the southern room (O1), and it was expanded first by O3 and then by O4. Building O in its final form was composed of four rooms; the hearth in O1 was covered over with a new floor and a bench, and a new hearth and oven were put into the largest room, O3. A new unit was built at a later time against the west wall of Building O: Building N. Building N was originally a one-room structure (N2), then became a three-room building with the addition of Rooms N3 and N5, the latter with a hearth. Finally, N1 was constructed and the doorway connecting Rooms N2 and N3 was blocked creating two separate units: N1-N2 and N3-N5. Both N1 and N5 were large rooms containing hearths. N4 with its hearth was constructed at some time afterward, although its precise relationship to the rest of the complex is not clear because of later disturbance.

What seems to be represented here is the growth and budding off of families. Building I, Rooms I3-I5, formed the original unit, built at the founding of the settlement. At some time, the available space became inadequate to the needs of the household, perhaps with the addition of more children or of older parents or kin, and two new rooms were added on (I1-I2). Later still, a new and independent unit was needed (Building O), perhaps for the family of one of the children of the original inhabitants of Building I, and it was built adjoining the original house and equipped with its own hearth room; this was first a two-room structure, but was expanded to first three and then four rooms as the family grew. As the children of this family became independent, a new structure was built to the west (Building N). A single room comprised this building (N2) at first, but as this family grew and more rooms were necessary, two new rooms were added (N3 and N5). Finally, Building N was divided into two buildings of two rooms each (N1-N2, N3-N5) by the blocking of the doorway connecting N2 and N3 and by the addition of a new large hearth

room (N1). Thus the cluster in its final form incorporated four separate households.

The other houses in the settlement show growth and features similar to those observed in Building I-O-N. All of the buildings vary in ground plan, at least in part due to topographical features and available space, and the amount of dwelling space differs from cluster to cluster and house to house. Initial units had floor spaces of approximately 30–40 m² (Day *et al.* 2016). In their final forms, most of the individual houses incorporated floor areas of 20–50 m², depending on the number of rooms; single-room structures tended to be smaller, while those with three or more rooms were larger. Building Complex C-D had the largest single domestic units (Rooms C3-C4-C5: total roofed space 74.87 m²; Rooms D1-D2-D3: total roofed space 53.99 m²), as well as the smallest (Room C1: 18.28 m²). Of the complexes for which we can get good measurements, the smallest is Building Complex E, with a floor area of more than 77.64 m²; Building Complex C-D is the largest cluster, with a total floor area of 202.09 m². Its position on top of the ridge in proximity to Building A-B together with its size and the size of many of its rooms suggests that its families may have enjoyed higher status than those groups living in the buildings on the slopes of the ridge (Glowacki and Klein 2011: 411).

The houses are differently arranged in terms of privacy, but when the entrances into the buildings can be reconstructed, they either lead into the hearth room through a vestibule or small room with a doorway to one side (Rooms D5 and I4) or they are on the axis of the building going directly into the hearth room (Rooms D1 and E1). Thus the center of the household would be hidden from view in the first type, but visible to outsiders in the second, although the rooms in the second type may have faced on semi-enclosed courts that would have created privacy. Many of the units incorporated courtyards within them (Buildings I, E2-E3-E7, K1, and K4) or faced on courts (Buildings D1-D3, C3-C5, E1-E4 and J1), so the daily activities of the inhabitants could be carried out either in private or in more public spaces.

The finds from within the buildings support the interpretation based on the analysis of the architecture. The material recovered from the floors and embedded in the roofing clay in the rooms shows something of the assemblages of everyday life, although they are not necessarily complete and are of limited use alone in determining social structure or daily life.² Pottery vessels and stone tools comprise the majority of objects found in the houses, and the patterns in these objects across the site are revealing. Like the architecture, the ceramic assemblages are replicated in nearly every building, including similar numbers and types of vessels for food consumption, food preparation, and storage. Taking into account the differing states of preservation of the houses, we can say that a typical assemblage for a household consisted of 4–15 decorated drinking vessels (larger numbers coming generally from the larger units), 1–2 jugs, a large bowl (*kalathos*) or

krater that was often elaborately decorated, a fenestrated stand for holding the bowls, basins for food preparation and other household activities, a large cooking dish (similar in shape to a wok) and 2–6 other cooking pots (generally provided with tripod legs), 2–3 small storage vessels, at least one pithos for large-scale storage, and a number of other utilitarian vessels for lighting or heating. Slight differences in the assemblages may reveal differing functions of the buildings or status of their inhabitants. For example, the assemblages of Building J resemble those of the elite building (Building A-B) in terms of fine wares and storage containers, suggesting that the inhabitants may have enjoyed a higher status than people from other units, as is also indicated by its position on the summit. Building Complex E below the summit on the southeast, on the other hand, had greater capacity for storage than any of the other houses. The stone tools from each household are also similar, consisting of a variety of choppers, pounders, grinders, and sharpeners.

To sum up, the expansion of the houses and the creation of new buildings along with the replication of the hearth room and cooking facilities seems to indicate that the basic unit in the community was a nuclear family: the houses generally grew in size with the family, and when a new generation became independent, a house with its own hearth room was built next to the original unit. The use of existing walls for building, the proximity of one house to the next, and the preference for enlarging existing structures rather than creating separate freestanding buildings seems to indicate the growth of nuclear or minimally extended families (Day, Glowacki, and Klein 2000; Glowacki 2002, 2004, 2007; Glowacki and Klein 2011: 410). These families may have begun with a single conjugal unit but expanded over time, thereby resulting in intergenerational co-residency.³ That the Vronda community revolved around subsistence agriculture and herding is certain from the animal bones and organic remains recovered in the houses, and the requirements of farming provide old and young with numerous incentives for living together (Huebner, [Chapter 9](#), this volume). While the individual houses belonged to nuclear families, the clusters represent multi-household units of kin-related groups, a sort of extended family (Glowacki 2007). Two buildings, however, did not show this agglutinative growth: the Shrine and Building A-B, both important public buildings, that is, used by and made accessible to some members of the community, but not necessarily all (Sjögren 2007: 149). The households seem to have been independent, storing and cooking their own food, including baking, which in other times and places on Crete has been done communally. The presence of fine decorated tableware in all of the houses, especially the large kraters and stands, suggests that there was social sharing of food, perhaps among the members of the extended family represented by the clusters. Building A–B shows evidence for ritual feasting and drinking on a wider scale than occurred within or between the households, and the Shrine provided a venue for communal religious activity, probably in an open court

to the west of the building.

It is difficult to estimate the population of this agricultural community, as for any ancient settlement (Whitelaw 2001: 15–19). Twenty to 25 houses can be reasonably postulated. If we accept that the Vronda settlement was made up of nuclear or minimally extended families, then each household probably had four to seven individuals (Glowacki 2007: 134, based on the sizes of the houses; Whitelaw 2001: 15–17 gives the figure of 4–5 individuals, while Nowicki 1999: 147 suggests 5–8), giving a figure for the population of 100–75 people living in the houses of the Vronda settlement.

It is unfortunate that there is currently no burial evidence to go along with the twelfth-century settlement, since it might help to confirm or add to what can be seen in the buildings. The tholos tombs found around the edges, although they could have been originally constructed when the village was occupied, produced material of later date (late eleventh to ninth centuries).⁴ They may have been used by the descendants of the former inhabitants who had moved to one of the other Kavousi sites. Similarly, although the cremation burials made in the area of the twelfth-century settlement in the eighth and early seventh centuries seem too far removed chronologically to shed light on the social organization of the twelfth century (Day 1995, 2011c), it is again possible that the burying population descended from the original Vronda inhabitants, or at least maintained some memory of those earlier people. It is interesting therefore to note that these burials, multiple cremations made in stone-lined enclosures, also appear in clusters around the site, and some limited osteological evidence suggests that they were family enclosures. The idea of family graves placed in clusters around the former village is remarkably similar to the organization proposed for the earlier settlement and suggests a continuity of family structure into the eighth century.

Kinship Structures in Bronze and Early Iron Age Crete

The nuclear family has been suggested for Crete in general in the Early Iron Age, but until now without any supporting evidence other than modern ethnographic parallels (Nowicki 1999: 147). Vronda provides the evidence from architecture and finds for the growth of nuclear families creating larger clusters of kin-related groups. It is not the only site of this period that can be interpreted in this way, although elsewhere the evidence is ambiguous. The Kavousi sites of Kastro and Azoria have not yet produced house or settlement plans of the twelfth century to compare with Vronda. The nearby LM IIIC site of Chalasmenos, however, has been almost entirely uncovered and shows domestic units with hearths, some possible elite structures, a shrine, and a

kiln, all with streets and courts separating them into groups (Tsipopoulou and Coulson 2000; Tsipopoulou 2001, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2011a, 2011b). Since this site has not yet been fully studied or published, it is difficult to know if the same pattern of expanding households can be seen in the architecture. Although Chalasmenos does seem to have features similar to Vronta, with buildings arranged in clusters that share walls, the excavator believes that the plan of the settlement is different from that at Vronta and indicates a social organization based on clans rather than nuclear families (Tsipopoulou 2009: 135, 2011a: 345–6).⁵ Either variation in social structure existed in this period on Crete, or further study will reveal greater similarities to Vronta than have so far been apparent. Farther to the west, on a peak overlooking the upland Lasithi Plain on Mt. Dikte, is another contemporary site that may show similarities to Vronta: Karphi (Pendlebury, Pendlebury, and Money-Coutts 1937–8; Seiradaki 1960; Day 2011a, 2011b; Wallace 2005, 2011, 2012). This site, excavated in the 1930s by the British, was hurriedly published, so information about the finds and the architecture is limited.⁶ Although individual houses were difficult to define and evidence for the sequence of building has not been presented, groupings of buildings were identified, and they may represent kin-related clusters of households of nuclear families like those found at Vronta (Day 2011a: 328–35, 2011b: 320–1). Other contemporary sites, such as Knossos (Warren 1983, 2007), Chania (Hallager and Hallager 2000), Chamalevri (Andreadaki-Vlasaki and Papadopoulou 2005, 2007), and Sybrita/Thronos (D’Agata 1997–2000, 1999), while they have some architectural remains, have not provided a clear picture of the building and settlement development as at Vronta, Karphi, and Chalasmenos, although at Chania the excavators recognized that the buildings were arranged in clusters (Hallager and Hallager 2000: 131). It would appear from the evidence of the architecture, then, that Vronta is not unique in its basic family structure in this period, but that other types of social arrangements may also have existed.

Because Vronta belongs to a transitional phase in Greek culture, it is interesting to compare its situation both with what can be said about the earlier Minoan culture and with what we know for the later classical city-state. The family organization at Vronta may have continued what existed in earlier Bronze Age cultures, brought there from Minoan communities, or it may represent something new, instituted by the inhabitants when they left their old homes and migrated to the mountain sites of east Crete in the twelfth century.

We have little information about families in Minoan Crete, a result both of bias in site selection by archaeologists and a focus on the reconstruction of the political, economic, and religious organization of the elites during the palatial era. What little work has been done on the family in Minoan Crete must be based on the analysis of archaeological material in the absence of written

evidence.⁷ In recent years, however, some attention has been paid to household analysis on Crete diachronically (Westgate, Fisher, and Whitley 2007; Glowacki and Vogeikoff-Brogan 2011), and there are hints of family structures in the Minoan era. For the period immediately preceding the twelfth century, few remains of domestic structures are known, and the interpretation of the period is fraught with difficulty.⁸ Since earlier buildings were reused and adapted in many of the towns, their plans do not reveal much about the social structure of their communities (McEnroe 2010: 139–40). The small village of Chondro Viannou in south central Crete, however, belongs entirely to this period; it has contiguously built rooms and evidence for at least one building that was expanded, possibly similar to the way in which the Vronta houses grew (Hayden 1990: 204–6). For the earlier Neopalatial period there is more information. A number of smaller, non-elite towns were excavated early in the twentieth century, and even though new excavations and studies have been carried out on their houses, focus has generally been limited to a functional analysis of domestic space, and little attempt has been made to deduce anything about the internal organization of the community or its kinship structures. Nevertheless, there are a few exceptions. Whitelaw has suggested on the basis of the small size and uniformity of the houses at Gournia that they represent the dwellings of nuclear families (Whitelaw 2001: 19). The houses at Mochlos have been interpreted as representing the households of nuclear or slightly extended families (Brogan and Barnard 2011: 196–7). The growth in the houses surrounding the palatial structure at Zakros has also been seen as indicative of nuclear families gradually forming extended families (Platon 2011: 152–3, 156–9). Although the houses of the Neopalatial period are very different in configuration from those of the twelfth century, it seems that at least the non-elite structures reflect the same underlying social structure that appears in the twelfth century at Vronta. The family structure may even be traced as far back as the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3000–2200 BCE), before the advent of the palaces on Crete.⁹ It seems likely, then, that the people who moved up into the mountain sites of Crete in the twelfth century brought with them an existing social structure, based on the nuclear family.

It would also appear that the same pattern of living arrangements lasted beyond the eleventh century. The Kastro at Kavousi in the eighth century shows signs of independent households belonging to nuclear families within larger clusters that may represent the dwellings of kin-related groups, as at Vronta (Mook 2011: 480). The structure of nuclear families living in kin-related clusters, however, probably altered in the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods. The urban space of Azoria Kavousi was reorganized in the early Archaic period with new communal meeting and dining structures and houses of plans different from those of earlier periods, plans which anticipated Classical and Hellenistic Cretan houses (Haggis and Mook 2011: 377–80). The houses in many of the later Cretan city-states differ from the

standard Greek types, and although people probably lived within nuclear families, the existence of the Cretan communal social system may have changed the focus of the society from the family to the community (Westgate 2007).¹⁰

Conclusions

Vronda provides clear evidence for the existence of the nuclear family in the twelfth century and for extended families living in close proximity in clusters. Similar arrangements, but without the compelling supporting evidence, can be suggested for other contemporary sites on Crete, and can be traced back into the Minoan past of the Neopalatial era if not earlier. The survival of this type of family can be seen through the eighth century on Crete, at least in the Kavousi area, but it may not have lasted into the Classical period because of the institution of the communal social system on the island.

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Notes

- 1 That Building A-B was an elite structure with a function different from the house complexes can be seen in its architecture (large size, careful construction, incorporation of a second story, rooms with specialized functions), architectural history (little expansion over time), and contents, including far larger storage capacity than the households, suggesting greater wealth and a higher status for the inhabitants. The elaborately decorated stemmed drinking cups found in the building suggest that convivial events were held within, and it has been interpreted as a dwelling for a ruler, who maintained power and position by hosting feasts and drinking rituals (Day and Snyder 2004; Day, Klein, and Turner 2009), although it is possible that it served as a building for storing communal goods and serving communal feasts.
- 2 The settlement at Vronda was abandoned without destruction in the middle of the eleventh century, and much material was left behind; as with other religious buildings in the area, the Vronda Shrine was abandoned with all of its cult equipment in place (Gesell 1999, 2001, 2004). The people apparently took some of the more portable and precious objects with them, like the metal tools attested by the stone tools for sharpening (whetstones and pumice), as well as smaller storage jars, cooking pottery, and some fine table wares. Since the buildings remained open for a considerable period of time, there was ample opportunity for disturbance of the material left behind; even after the roofs collapsed sealing the material in a matrix of clay and then debris from wall tumble, there was further contamination

by burial activities (eleventh through early seventh centuries BCE) and later Venetian and Ottoman habitation on the ridge (seventeenth through nineteenth centuries CE).

- 3 According to Huebner's classification ([Chapter 9](#), this volume), the houses could indicate household structures of Types 3 (simple nuclear family), 4 (nuclear family extended by an elderly parent), or 5 (multiple family household).
- 4 Boyd 1901: 132–6; Gesell, Day, and Coulson 1983: 394–409.
Unfortunately, most of these tholos tombs were found robbed, and little skeletal material survives from them. The few that were not robbed were cleared by Boyd (Tomb IV) or by a local landowner (Tomb IX), and the bones were not kept. Thus, there is little osteological evidence to determine whether they were family burials or not, but the fact that there were three or four burials in each suggests that they were intergenerational family tombs.
- 5 The excavator identifies many units at Chalasmenos that do not show the kind of agglutinative growth seen at Vronda, and she suggests that the site is made up of independent “megarons,” a building type that came into Crete from the mainland of Greece. These are seen as different from what has been found at Vronda and are thought to represent an attempt on the part of the local population to associate themselves with the dominant elite group that had controlled the island in the period just before the founding of the settlement.
- 6 Because Pendlebury produced only a block plan of the settlement, there is no indication of the sequence of construction for most of the buildings. Recent cleaning by Wallace has provided stone-by-stone drawings of the walls and features, but the original structures were never consolidated, and after so much time has elapsed many of the stones are no longer in their original positions. Renewed excavations by Wallace have revealed new structures in different areas, indicating that the site was more extensive than originally thought, but the relationships of the newly excavated rooms to other rooms and buildings previously uncovered has not yet been determined.
- 7 Although writing was produced in the palatial structures in the form of hieroglyphic script and Linear A, the language(s) for which these writing systems were developed has not yet been completely deciphered. The Greek Linear B documents from the Final Palatial period can be read, but the tablets were used for administrative record keeping, probably by outsiders from the mainland of Greece (the Mycenaean) who seem to have controlled the island during that period, and they do not tell us much about families or the non-elite people of the island at this time. Indeed, the

majority of the population may have been entirely different from those writing Linear B texts in the palaces.

- 8 There is little consensus on the nature of this period on Crete (1450–1200 BCE), and even the terminology is not fixed; here the term Final Palatial is used. All of the palaces of the Neopalatial period except Knossos were destroyed, but a few settlements were reinhabited. Whenever the palace at Knossos suffered its final calamity, administrative centers with Linear B documents were in use on the island until the thirteenth century.
- 9 The analysis of Myrtos, an Early Minoan site in eastern Crete, has led to contradictory interpretations of domestic establishments in this period. The excavator (Warren 1972) saw the site as a single building complex inhabited by an extended family or clan. Whitelaw (1983, 2007) identified five or six separate households made up of nuclear families, an interpretation that has found increasing favor.
- 10 Plato in the *Laws* and Aristotle in the *Politics* describe the Cretan communal system or *syssitia*, and the activities in the andreion are detailed in Athenaeus (4.143).

3

The Idea of Descent in Early Greek Kinship

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This chapter explores the meaning of descent and descent relationships in the social organization of Early Iron Age Greek communities. It therefore undertakes the study of one of the diagnostic areas that Huebner suggests in the introduction to this volume is one of the important metrics for investigating Mediterranean kinship. Since kinship groups (how they form and change, and what they mean) are a common thread of this volume, it seems useful to consider if there were precedents in the Greek communities of the Early Iron Age for family structures observed in other chapters in this volume. Can we place, for example, large descent groups in early Greece? What meaning did descent relationships have? What was the social significance of descent in the communities of Early Greek antiquity?

These questions are especially significant for studying extended family structures, since interpretations of Early Greek along with early Roman kinship systems have played a central role in the developing fundamental theories about corporate kinship groups. Early classical kinship groups as defined and described by nineteenth-century classical scholarship served as prototypes for anthropological kinship typologies. In the late nineteenth century, ethnologists drew on early classical models and comparative ethnographies to create schemes of progressive human social evolution.¹ Although not all schemes were intended to be universalizing (i.e., representing the course of all human histories), they presented the development of human societies in general through progressive stages of social, religious, political, and technological advancement. In these progressions, early Greece and Rome provided models for the advance from kinship-based societies to state-based societies (Varto 2014). The earlier nineteenth-century classical historians (in particular, Niebuhr, Grote, and Mommsen), whose work the ethnologists used, interpreted early Greece and Rome as societies dominated and defined by the *genos* and *gens*, which they understood as “clan” (Smith 2006: 81–8; Varto 2014). They painted a picture of communities organized by kinship into a large corporate descent groups, until the polis developed and state-based organization and its ties arose to compete with and supersede kinship-based organization and its ties. Ethnologists drew on these trajectories from kinship to state to develop the

typologies for tribal kinship-based societies, which they understood to be the evolutionary precursors to state-based societies. Early Greece and Rome, as the prototypes to these typologies, came to perfectly represent them. Early Greek social structure and kinship systems thus informed not only the scholarship of the family in antiquity, but also that of kinship cross-culturally and even universally through the development of kinship studies in early anthropology.

In anthropology, the problems with such typologies of kinship-based societies have long been recognized.² In the classics, the argument that these typologies are not accurate for describing Early Greek society goes back at least to the work of Roussel and Bourriot from the late 1970s (Bourriot 1976; Roussel 1976). Their work explored how the “kinship groups” of the later polis did not have their origins in early corporate descent groups which dominated the community and were replaced by the collective of the state, but are later civic developments of the polis. Their assessment revealed an undue influence of nineteenth-century ethnologists and fourth-century sources on our understanding of Early Greek kinship systems. In 2006, Smith approached similar questions in an important study on the Roman *gens*, reconsidering its origin and character, and our intellectual inheritance of the descent group it came to represent in earlier scholarship (Smith 2006: 65–113, 114–43). Therefore, whenever we consider the family and kinship systems of Greek communities in the Early Iron Age, we are engaging with an intellectual history in which the very kinship systems in question sit at the origins of the modern study of kinship and family.

Evidence for Early Iron Age Kinship

The work of Bourriot, Roussel, and Smith (among others) has shown that tribal typologies are not inappropriate for Early Greek communities simply because they are based on old theories, but because they do not make sense of the evidence now available, especially archeological evidence and less positivist readings of the ancient sources. This is significant since what we have for this period is primarily poetry and archeology. The state of the material evidence of the family does limit some of the questions we can answer and the types of studies we can do. There are types of questions this chapter cannot answer as others in this volume can with access to different data sets. For example, it is not possible to embark on prosopographical studies of families of Dark Age Greece from textual evidence nor to use census data to make inferences about family forms; the required information simply does not exist. The material and poetic nature of it makes it difficult if not in some cases impossible to investigate most of the diagnostic areas suggested in the introduction. Addressing social organization, however, is

possible with the evidence available and while maintaining sound interpretive methods. Compared to later periods of Mediterranean history, the archeological evidence of domestic architecture is rather scant, consisting of stone foundations with few contextual finds and at disparate sites at different times throughout the Greek world.³ The mortuary record of early Greece is similarly dispersed across sites and over time. The situation is such that questions about family and kinship in this period have to be approached broadly, identifying patterns across sites, structures, and necropoleis. Certain patterns do, however, emerge.

Using the poetry of the period (namely, Homeric, Hesiodic, and Archaic poetry) to understand the Early Greek family also has its limitations. Alongside challenges faced universally whenever we literature to historical questions, there are the potentially irresolvable questions of authorship, orality, dating, context, and the historicity of poetic worlds, that concern not only Homeric poetry but all Early Greek poetry. A brief look at the scholarship on Homer and history will reveal the difficulties historians of any stripe face in drawing on it. If Homeric society is or an amalgam, not based directly on the reality of any historical period (as the leading theories have it) and comprehensible, but not necessarily recognizable, to Early Iron Age audiences, can it be used to historical ends at all?⁴ Even if we could pinpoint a time and place for when and where the Homeric epics were crystallized into the forms in which we now have them, we still could not treat the world of the epics as if it has a direct relationship with an historical reality. Some Hesiodic poetry and Archaic poetry seem to present less complex and fraught quandaries about their relationship to historical worlds. The *Works and Days*, for example, whatever its authorship, date, and origin, seems purposefully set in the agrarian community of its audience, rather than in a distant heroic age. Similarly Archaic poetry can give a window, for example, into the world of the elite symposium or oligarchic polis. It may be possible to export information directly out of such poetry, combing it for small glimpses of kinship relationships, creating a world of bits and pieces from few and disparate poetic sources. But that would be to miss the greater opportunity that Early Greek poetry affords us for studying kinship: its real strength as historical evidence lies in what it has to tell us about what poets and their audiences were thinking about and how they saw, questioned, and perhaps understood their world.⁵ Poetry gives us access to the world of ideas and their meaning.

Some of these ideas concern the heady, universal things about men and gods, power and heroism, and human community and conflict that have given Homeric poetry its exulted place in the Western literary canon. Others, however, seem more rooted in the agrarian communities of the Early Iron Age and the developing Archaic polis, ideas, for example, about trade and travel, elitism, leadership, politics, and how justice is decided and meted out locally.

Among these ideas, we may count the ways in which family and kinship were expressed, explored, and understood. And through these, we can begin to explore the meaning of descent in Early Greek communities.

Descent in Early Greek Thinking

Descent, often expressed in genealogies or in brief statements of relatedness, was a way of organizing information and relationships between humans, heroes, and gods as well as between abstractions and ethical concepts. Descent relationships conveyed affinities or causal relationships between various peoples, things, and ideas, along the lines of “like produces like.” For example, the *Theogony* gives the genealogical relationships of Conflict: she is the child of Night and mother of such personified concepts as Labor, Hunger, Pain, Lies, and Ruin (*Theog.* 216–22). The genealogical ordering here tells us that Conflict shares both an affinity and a causal relationship with all of these things: Night brings about Conflict, and Conflict brings about such like things as Labor, Hunger, Pain, Lies, and Ruin. They are of the same family and alike to one another, and one leads to another. Like produces like. This biological model of reproduction went beyond the genealogies of divinities or personifications and was applied to relationships between abstractions to express causal and like relationships between closely understood things. For example, in Solon and Theognis, *koros* (excess, greed) breeds *hubris* (Sol. 6.3, Thgn. 15), or in Pindar, *hubris* is the mother of *koros* (*Ol.* 13.10). Motherhood here is a metaphor of biological relatedness, where probably no real personification is intended. The important point is not that *koros* is a goddess, but that it gives rise to or causes *hubris*, or vice versa.

Genealogical organization was, therefore, concerned with both affinity and causation through the recounting of origins, from what or from whom something or someone has arisen. This can be further seen in the language through which kinship is often expressed in Early Greek genealogical material. The notion of being related by blood, *haima*, often accompanies the notion of generation (as in *that from which one is made or generated*). For example, this is what we see in what appears to be a stock phrase from the genealogies of Glaucus and Aeneas in Homer: τούτης τοι γενεῆς τε καὶ αἵματος εὖχομαι εἶναι (I claim to be from such generation and blood) (*Il.* 6.211; *Il.* 20.241). Kinship expressed in such terms reveals a significance placed on relatedness based on origins, from what or whom something or someone has arisen. *Genos* and *genea* in the Homeric epics usually indicate this idea of origins (Bourriot 1976: 240–69; Patterson 1998: 1–2, 48–9).⁶ In Early Greek poetry, both terms express birth and family as in race or stock. The meanings race and stock, as well as family and lineage all extend from the idea of a group of things with the same origin, and are, in Early Greek

poetry, applied not only to individual humans, but also to whole races, types of people, animals, and even concepts.

The ancient Greek interest in origins is well attested. Ancient literature and history are rife with aetiologies that explain not only how something came to be, but also how it came to be as it is. To understand the origins of something was to understand its nature and character, why it was the way it was. Descent was part of this interest in understanding the present through the past. It is tied to conceptions about the past and the movement of time, and carried both linear and cyclical ideas about the progression of human events, in that what was once true, will be true again in present time. People as well as things could be understood in this way. For example, genealogy is a way in which Homeric heroes lay claim to an identity. Through genealogies, they boast, intimidate, discover specific relationships, garner respect, confirm their worthiness, and generally bolster their personal reputation. A Homeric hero recounts his ancestry and the deeds of his family to establish his personal identity and character, especially in regard to his battle prowess and worthiness of mind.⁷ A Homeric hero is, therefore, a product of his origin and lineage, his *genos* or *genea*. The *logos* of the hero's *genea*, his *genealogia*, is the expression of his connection to the origins which made him as he is.

There is, perhaps, a similar idea of descent discernible in Early Greek burials that likewise connects the present to the past, a connection perhaps predicated on this notion of like produces like. Descent was likely the idea behind the reuse of tombs, burying the dead near or in pre-existing mounds, or layering later burials on top of earlier ones.⁸ Such burial customs point to an idea of descent, whether or not the dead were related to one another biologically. In the case of burials in and around pre-existing mounds, especially those in prominent locations (like those in the Ceramicus in Athens), the idea of descent seems similar to that at play in Pindar's genealogical statements about the ancestors of the victors he praises. Pindar does not link his victors through mythical figures with complete genealogies, but instead brings the distant past up close to the present by skipping from mythical ancestors directly to contemporary individuals, what Thomas has labelled "telescoping" (Thomas 1989: 159).⁹

At the necropolis at Vroulia, the burials suggest an idea of descent more similar perhaps to genealogies, expressing successive connections. The layering of several cremation burials in the same spot appears deliberate at Vroulia, where some cremations are followed by several more successive cremations (Morris 1992: 179, 186–7). Nineteen out of the 31 locations with a cremation burial have evidence of more than one cremation (Morris 1992: 176–8, tab. 9). Two have up to nine successive cremations. The successive cremation burials tend to increase in depth as the number of cremations increases, whereas the singular cremation burials range from moderately deep to very shallow.¹⁰ The ones with successive cremations, therefore, were dug

quite deep for the initial cremation and those with the most cremations are among the deepest at the necropolis. This is a good indication that these locations were intended from the beginning to be used continuously. That grave goods were concentrated at the lowest (and earliest) levels of the successive cremations further supports this intended use. What we have at Vroulia is probably an idea of descent expressed in burial, a group of dead individuals to whom the recent dead are connected. The site of Vroulia was occupied over an approximately 50-year span (625–575 BCE), however, which is not enough time for up to nine generations of adults to be buried. Therefore, the burials cannot reflect strict linear descent, but more perhaps the connection of several kinspersons over two generations with an honored.

Descent was important in early Greece in the ordering of concepts and information and in drawing affinities and causal relationships. It brought the past up close with the present and linked concepts, things, and even people. But what was the social significance of expressing such connections, in genealogies or burials? What was the social significance or origins and “like producing like” in Early Greek communities? Why was descent an important concept?

Descent and Kinship Grouping

The interest in descent in writing and thinking led many to conclude that there were corporate kinship groups in Early Greek communities. Burial groupings, genealogies, as well as certain kinship terms were thought to be evidence of corporate kinship-based groups.¹¹ An interest in descent, however, or an importance placed upon it, in a given culture or community does not necessarily mean kinship groups based upon descent. For example, the seven civilizations that Trigger investigates in his comparative work *Understanding Early Civilizations* had kinship systems that were characterized by descent (Trigger 2003: 167). Not all, however, placed the same type of social significance upon it: four were characterized by patrilineal descent groups, two by endogamous groups or demes, and one by non-corporate descent. The last example is ancient Egypt, which “did not have, beyond the nuclear family, any kinship unit that possessed land, political power, or a sense of corporate identity” (Trigger 2003: 167). The idea of descent was, however, important. Ancient Egyptians tracked descent relationships, which were important for inheritance claims, and worshipped ancestors in funerary cults and in household veneration (O’Connor 1990: 12–14). Descent was significant, but not as the basis for kinship organization or social differentiation along the lines of corporate groups. The situation in Early

Greek communities appears to have been similar. The evidence of burials, households, and genealogical expressions of descent point to a kinship system that was focused from its earliest times in the Protogeometric period on the household over generations, but in which there was a social significance attached to the idea of descent.

Households over one, two, or even three generations can be seen archeologically in residency and burial patterns, which both suggest small residential descent groups with small numbers over a few generations. The idea of descent, as it seems to appear in burials, did not connect a long succession of individuals following the model of a clan, but rather clustered individuals on the scale of a household over a few generations. Burials more clearly organized by an idea of descent occurred over only short spans of time in early Greece. In the reuse of Bronze Age burial sites in the Iron Age, Antonaccio has shown that any renewed activity was short-lived, lasting only two to three generations (Antonaccio 1995: 141–2, 245–6, 252–3). At Vroulia, where a notion of descent also seems to lie behind successive cremation burials, the number of cremations in each spot over the 50-year period during which the site was occupied, suggests not long lineages but connected households over one or two generations (Morris 1992: 179, 186–9). The reuse of graves in the Argolid in the Geometric period and the clustering of mounds in the necropolis at Pitheculae reveal a similar expression of descent over a few generations, probably the relationships of a generational household and its immediate offshoots. At some point the line of descent truncates, and new generational groups begin their own sets of burials. An inscription from Liopesi of ca. 540 BCE seems to provide an example of such a transition, or at least the establishment of a new burial location or marker:

Οἱμοι Πεδιάρχο | τῷ Ἐνπεδίωνος.
Πεδιάρχος ἄρχει τῷ < ν > σ|ε < μάτῶν.

Alas, for Pediarchos son of Empedion.

Pediarchos begins the tombs. (Pfohl no. 57 = *SEG* iii 56 = *IG* i³ 1267)

Pediarchos, as Humphreys interprets, is not to be buried among his ancestors but is to establish his own set of tombs in which his descendants will be buried, his children and his children's children (Humphreys 1983: 94). Perhaps this is where the generational group of the households of Empedion truncated, or perhaps it is as Humphreys suggests, that Pediarchos predeceased his parents, and they intended to be buried alongside him. In either case, we do see the beginning of what appears to be a group of tombs for the family. The short period of use, the number of burials, and the age and sex structure of many Early Greek burial groups also suggest this scenario. [Table 3.1](#) presents information on probable burial groups from around the Greek world. The periods of use of most burial groups are short, fitting the span of one to three generations at most. Most of the numbers are too small to

represent large corporate descent groups. The age and sex structures, where reasonably reliable data is available, fit with models of household life cycles over a few generations (e.g., that presented by Gallant 1991: 17–30). Where the numbers and period of use are larger, there are no patterns that suggest an idea of descent behind the burials. We mostly see small groups over small time spans among the burial groups of the Early Greek world.

Table 3.1 Early Greek burial groups (Protogeometric through Archaic Period).

<i>Burial group</i>	<i>Period of use</i>	<i>Number of burials</i>	<i>Age structure</i>	<i>Sex structure</i>	<i>Possible interpretation</i>
Burials enclosed by an 8th-C peribolos wall in the Athenian Agora (Young 1939)	50–60 years	18	10 child urn burials and 8 adult burials	Mixed, unknown	Burial of a household over 2–3 generations
Small enclosure in the necropolis at Corinth (Blegen, Palmer, and Young 1964)	Burials share similar date	3 (+2)	3 adult burials and 2 possible child burials	Unknown	Burial place of one generation of a household -more burials outside of the enclosure with similar alignment
Burial cluster in the protogeometric cemetery at Nea Ionia (Smithson 1961)	Burials share similar date	6	4 adults and 2 children	Unknown	Burial place of a household over 1–2 generations
Archaic burial groups/plots at the Pantanello	Burials share similar date	Groups of about 3–12	Mixed	Mixed (except 1 group with only female burials)	Familial burial plots over a few generations

Necropolis near Metaponto (Carter, Morter, and Toxey 1998: 143–65)					
Several hundred burial clusters at Pithecusae (Buchner 1975: 70–1; Ridgway 1992, 52–4)	About 50 years	Tomb clusters of around 10	Mixed infants, children, adults	Mixed	Burial clusters of families over a few generations
Walled tomb enclosure at Vari (Humphreys 1983: 99)	Use of site for burials approx. 175 years	25	Unknown (data unpublished)	Unknown (data unpublished)	Elite burial ground with a few elite familial burial groups or one familial burial ground
Very large (15–16 m by 29 m) enclosed Archaic cemetery in the Athenian Agora (with no internal signs of grouping) (Thompson and Wycherley 1972: 10–12; Bourriot 1976, 980–9; Morris 1987: 67–8)	Burials concentrated in 50 year period (550–500 BCE)	18 intact burials from 550–500 BCE and 28 not datable	2 child burials (potentially more) and 16 adults (potentially more)	Unknown	Public cemetery? large family plot? elite cemetery for prominent individuals?

Burials enclosed by the Plattenbau in the Ceramicus in Athens (Kübler 1954, 17–19)	Burials share similar date	13	Adults	Unknown	Burial places of prominent individuals or possibly family over generations
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If we compare this to what is seen at the necropoleis at the Italian sites of Osteria dell’Osa and Pontecagnano, we can see how descent groups might inform burial practices and, therefore, be reflected in the mortuary record of a site. At Osteria dell’Osa there is evidence of possible descent groups in the systematic grouping of burials over a long period of time and patterns in the burial goods that suggest that group identity began to take precedence in later periods of the necropolis (Bietti Sestieri 1992: 141–61, 202–3, 206–11). At Pontecagnano, in the Orientalizing period, distinct elite burial groups have been observed, which drew connections to different areas of Italy through burial goods and which used the same locations for burial over centuries (Cuozzo 1994, 2003: 85–90, 125–8, 194–6, 2007: 229–38). Neither this sort of patterning in burial goods nor the organization of the burials over time to reflect lineages over long spans of time can be seen in the grouping of burials in Early Greek necropoleis. The closest parallels may be found in the mounds in the Ceramicus in Athens, where we can see an idea of descent at play in the setting of later burials into mounds over a significant amount of time, although not continuously or evenly over time. Kinship and descent were probably factors in burial grouping, and they operate on the scale of households over generations (small descent groups) rather than large descent groups made up of several households.

Early Greek houses similarly suggest rather small residential groups as opposed to large ones on the order of clans or tribes. Domestic architecture is primarily made up of one-room houses, only some of which at different times and at different sites were renovated into or replaced by multiple-room structures.¹² Within settlements, whether made up of detached or agglomerated structures, houses appear to have operated independently of one another with their own food preparation, food consumption, and storage areas.¹³ Some, especially those that increase in size or in complexity of access patterns, exhibit evidence of economic participation, for example, areas used for reception or storage for surpluses. Day-to-day life in early Greece was lived out within and around these small, seemingly independent structures. It may be that such independent units fostered or relied on group cooperation and/or affiliation. In the relatively small communities of early Greece, some

level of cooperation between all members must have been necessary as well as a high degree of interrelatedness. We are not dealing with households in isolation, but mostly small communities in the sparsely populated Dark Ages and only relatively larger communities in the Archaic Period.¹⁴ The question is not, therefore, whether such bonds did or did not exist, but rather what the political and social meanings of such bonds were. Were they understood as descent bonds and did that lead to political, religious, or social action within the community? We do not see evidence of such action in the material record of housing or burials. It is even possible that many of the communities were so small that their members were so interrelated as to make descent distinctions encompassing large amounts of people beyond a generation or two impossible or meaningless.

The evidence of housing and burials suggests, therefore, that the household over one, two, or three generations was the major descent idea by which Early Greek society was organized (and not large corporate descent groups). This is not to say, however, that Early Greek society could not also be organized by other means, but, that as far as kinship is concerned, the evidence leans toward organization along the lines of generational households. Despite this general pattern, there is still a temptation to interpret the archaeological evidence with anthropological tribal typologies, developed at their root from classical prototypes. Perceptions of kinship systems in Early Greek communities were colored for a long time by models influenced by the misinterpretation of key kinship terms like *genos* and *phylon*, by a nineteenth-century understanding of the early Roman *gens*, and by the civic “kinship” groups of later centuries (Smith 2006: 65–113, 114–43). As discussed above, *genos* in Early Greek poetry either has the sense of birth or origin or has a meaning derived from birth or origin, namely generation (as in generation from), descent, or lineage (Bourriot 1976: 240–69; Patterson 1998: 1–2, 48–9). *Genea* and *genos* do, therefore, indicate kinship through blood and biology, but not contemporary social groupings or divisions based upon that idea of kinship.¹⁵ When used in its extended classificatory sense and applied to humans in Early Greek poetry, the *genos* seems, indeed, to indicate the group of dead men from whom someone has arisen, as Donlan writes (Donlan 2007: 36). It does not indicate contemporary, active, living social groups based upon blood and biology in early Greece.

The terms *phylon* and *phrētrē* have likewise been found not to indicate corporate kinship groups. *Phylon* as a term in Early Greek poetry is broad and classificatory. Like the extended meanings of *genos* and *genea*, it indicates a generic class or family, as in a type of people, animal, or thing (Roussel 1976: 161–4; Donlan 1985: 295–6; 2007, 31). Only later in Greek history does *phylai* in the feminine indicate civic divisions and only in communities that became *poleis*, belying its roots as a principle of pre-*polis* social organization. As Hall points out, only once communities had an idea of themselves and

their civic boundaries could they divide themselves internally into approximately equal tribes (Hall 2007: 188–90). The term *Phrētrē* unlike *phylon*, *genos*, and *genea* is not used in a generic sense in Early Greek writing; it always seems to indicate a specific group (Donlan 2007: 31). The role ideas of kinship played in this grouping is unclear. *Phrētrē* is etymologically related to the Indo-European word for brother (Roussel 1976: 95–8; Lambert 1993: 269). This, however, does not mean that the term was used to denote kinship grouping in Early Greek communities, since etymological connection does not necessarily mirror historical development.¹⁶ In classical scholarship, *phrētrai* were traditionally interpreted within a nineteenth-century tribal framework, for example, by Glotz, who associates them with aristocratic kinship groups (Glotz 1930: 14–15, 17). Some idea of kinship may lie behind whatever kind of group is meant by the term *phrētrē*, but it need not be a biological conception of kinship. Perhaps, *phrētrai* were based on what some might label “fictive kinship,” in that, the kinship connections may not have been what *we* might consider biological. There is no clear indication that any such grouping was based on an idea of descent. Indeed, the contexts in which the term appears do not suggest a strong link with ideas of descent. The *phrētrai* are now usually interpreted as groups of neighboring families or groups of companions (De Sanctis 1912: 41–8; Andrewes 1961; Roussel 1976: 113, 117–22; Donlan 1985: 295–6, 2007: 31). The common thread of these interpretations connect them with military recruitment, service, or divisions. The idea of a “brotherhood” often implies in other cultures and times a type of kinship connection based on a tight bond, but created through something other than biological relatedness, like common experience, religious or social affiliation, cohabitation, or dedication to a cause. This could have been the idea expressed by *phrētrē* in Early Greek communities as well. In the end, it seems best to leave the question of the nature of *phrētrai* in early Greece rather open: *phrētrai* were groupings, probably linked to military service, which may have been based on an idea of kinship (likely “fictive” and not an idea of descent) and on whose more specific nature or formation, we can only speculate. Thus, in the kinship terms used in Early Greek writing, we do not see grouping on the basis of descent on the scale of corporate kinship groups, like clans or tribes.

Many scholars have seen Greek genealogy as primarily associated with aristocratic families and focus on genealogy’s role in establishing and securing the power and prestige of those families.¹⁷ This view is supported by the evidence to a degree; it needs some refinement, concerning the overall association of genealogies with groups, group solidarity, and group interests. Early Greek genealogical material (i.e., genealogies and genealogical statements as they survive in the texts, not in prosopographic reconstructions) does not show a direct link between genealogy making and the formation or maintenance of extended kinship groups. Genealogies do not draw connections between contemporary individuals or depict large family groups.

Even when they involve large families, such as those in the *Catalogue of Women*, they are much more vertical in character and structure, linking generations vertically through time and not horizontally across branches drawing contemporaneous connections. Genealogies recount groups of dead men, and sometimes women (Donlan 2007: 39). Greek genealogies were also not family trees; they recorded lines of descent or ancestry and rarely very thoroughly, with a very limited scope of information and web of relationships. Moreover, they are primarily mythical or mytho-historical. The instances of historical figures within a genealogy are very few indeed. Instead we tend to see them in telescoping situations as in Pindar's praise poetry, where the historical figure is said to be related to distant ancestors, but the individual is not placed within a genealogy connecting him to those ancestors. Among extant Early Greek genealogical material there is only one genealogy that may be considered to be wholly made up of historical figures, the genealogy of Alexander of Macedon in Herodotus (8.139), and even that genealogy is associated with a mythical legend of how the ancestor Perdiccas claimed the kingdom of Macedon (8.137–8). Figures considered by us to be historical appear among figures considered by us to be non-historical or mythical, for example the genealogy of Hippocrates connecting the father of medicine to Heracles and Asclepius (*FGrHist* 3 F59) or the genealogies of the Spartan kings in Herodotus going back to Heracles (6.204 and 8.131). The same sort of connection between myth and history appears in the genealogical stories associated with historical figures in the praise poetry of Pindar. Although the historical figures are not linked completely generation by generation through these stories to the mythical family in question, this does not represent a mythical-historical divide, but as Thomas argues, a telescoping that brings the distant past up close to the present. The association between the storied past and its figures and the contemporary world seems to be the whole point of expressing descent relationships in genealogies. They did not record family history as a charter through which descent groups could be formed. The information given in a genealogy of mostly mythical figures, but connected in some way to the present, could be expressed or exploited by any number of parties, from states and ethnic groups to individuals and households.¹⁸ What seems to be the case in early Greece is the use of genealogies and the invention of the familial past by individuals and families for social recognition and by *poleis* or ethnic groups for territorial claims or expressions of alliances or animosities as “natural” products of kinship. It was in these ways that descent was the basis for social differentiation.

Descent and the Creation of Status

Early Greek genealogies appear not to have been associated with corporate

kinship groups acting as groups with group interests, nor to have been fundamental in any sort of tribal or kinship-based society. Instead, they served the interests of individuals, households, and states, through expressing particularly beneficial kinship connections and ideas. Genealogies generally followed either a linear, descendant focused structure, in which descent relationships were traced down to a specific descendant, or a tendrilled, ancestor focused structure, in which descent was traced from an ancestor down through more than one branch. Regardless of their specific structure, almost all extant Early Greek genealogies combine stories with the recounting of descent.¹⁹ With only a few late exceptions, information beyond descent relationships is told through epithets, descriptions, and stories, sometimes short but often lengthy in relation to the genealogy as a whole.²⁰ This important element of story-telling meant that Early Greek genealogies conveyed not only relatedness, but also the deeds, exploits, and greatness of figures in the distant legendary past. A simple claim to have had great ancestors who did great things was not the entire point of genealogies or descent burials. For the state or ethnic group, genealogies were often a retrojection of the current situation in internal politics or international relations, or an expression of common ancestry and, therefore, ethnicity or alliance. The key to genealogical thinking for the individual, was the idea that a man, by being of the same lineage, is the same kind or type of man as those who performed such deeds and exploits and were great in the past. As in the biological model “like produces like.” For the individual and perhaps his household, the expression or re-iteration of such ideas contributed to establishing and upholding social status. Genealogies were, as Rose points out, legitimizing tools of social and political power (Rose 2009: 474). This complements Whitley’s formulation of Early Iron Age Greek communities as “ranked societies,” in which high status is not ascribed, but attained; wealth and family are necessary for high status and even leadership within the community, but do not guarantee it (Whitley 1991a, 1991b, 2001: 89–90, 97–8).²¹ It also complements the argument put forward by Duploux about elitism in later centuries, that elite status in ancient Greece was not a matter of birth and hereditary wealth and power, but of prestige continually made, promoted, and maintained by individuals within a social environment of agonism (Duploux 2006: 12–35).

The Early Greek interest in descent seems to lay in competition, identity, and status through the idea of inheritance. Its importance was not so much in inheritance of property, land, or even citizenship in this period. How does one inherit the physical property of a god or a hero? How does a dead man inherit property through association with a long deceased individual under a funerary mound? The inheritance of land is a key element in charter myths which were often expressed as ethnic or political genealogies, but not in individual genealogies. Descent-based citizenship was a worry of the fifth century and beyond, when the differences between citizen and non-citizen was of primary

concern and parentage was key in determining citizenship (Manville 1990: 7–12, 67–9, 70–92; Lomas 2000: 173–5). The genealogical material of early Greece does not reveal such a concern; genealogies were not a record of parentage, but of great heroic and divine ancestors. For the individual and his immediate family, descent from illustrious ancestors proved inheritance not of property or even status, but, more precisely, the inheritance of the character or nature that gave access to status.

The quest or competition for status is supported by domestic architecture in which we can see the growth of the physical household, the increasing complexity of access patterns, and the increasing functional specialization of space (for reception of visitors and for storage) at some sites and in some houses as related to the economic activity and success of a household. Decisions to further subdivide the physical space of houses seem to have been made toward increasing or adapting storage space or separating it from areas where guests may have been received (Cambitoglou *et al.* 1988: 154; Morris 2000: 285; Ault 2007: 260). Storage also appears to be a primary concern across many Early Greek domestic structures. Many of the rooms at Vroulia may also be identified as storage rooms (Morris 1992: 193–5, fig. 47). At Megara Hyblaea silos located in three eighth-century houses were possibly connected to trade in surplus agricultural produce, indicating a potential role for the household in such ventures (De Angelis 2002). At other sites in different time frames we also have evidence, besides signs of storage, of burgeoning household economies tied to wider trade networks (see also Lang 2005: 27). For example, in a multi-room courtyard house at the site of Euesperides in Cyrenaica, there is evidence of a murex-dyeing workshop (Gill and Flecks 2007). The large quantity of storage *pithoi* and *amphorai* at the site of Xobourgo on Tenos may also indicate trade connected to households, if the building can be classified as domestic (Kontoleon 1953: 260; Fagerström 1988: 136; Hoepfner 1999: 191).²² It appears that Early Greek households, in different times and places, participated in or belonged to the wider economic world of the Mediterranean.

The changes we see in housing at different times and places likely reflect the economic participation and success of particular households, as does the modest, not vast, differentiation in domestic architecture (similarly, Green 1990: 44; Lang 2005: 18–19; Morgan 2009: 62). Most Early Greek houses were modest one-room affairs. Although, overall, houses increased in size on a Braudelian scale from the eighth to fourth centuries BCE, this growth is uniform neither across the Greek world nor across settlements (Morris 2004; 2005: 107–25, esp. fig. 5.1; 2007: 230–1; Osborne 2007: 300–1; Bresson 2007: 210–11). At some Early Greek communities like Zagora (Cambitoglou *et al.* 1988: 106–111) and Megara Hyblaea (De Angelis 2003: 17–32), some houses were modified (in the eighth and seventh to sixth centuries respectively) to create larger or more complex domestic spaces with more

complex access patterns and limited functional specialization; others did not. The motivations behind the changes in some houses toward larger sizes and/or complexity in access patterns seem to have been to increase storage space, to include space for receiving visitors, and to provide a modest level of functional specialization for these two activities. These motivations can be linked to participation and success in the domestic economy, which, for the Early Greek world, was rooted for the most part in agricultural surplus. The accumulation of surplus for trade would have required storage, and economic activity probably required relationship building with other members of the community. It is possible also that the size of the household grew along with its economic success. This success probably also enhanced social status and encouraged modification of the physical space of the household to reflect that status and the household's role in the community. The display of such social and economic prosperity could have fed back into the ongoing success of the household. In this way, through possibly increasing population through family size and by promoting the significance of the household physically, the changing household membership and the physical house itself not only reacted to economic and social developments, but also contributed to changes in the social environment.

That the changes were not uniform suggests that there were winners and losers in this economic development, and probably increasing social stratification based on wealth at such sites, at least during certain period of times. Although the disparities between Early Greek houses in size, complexity, and quality are not vast enough to suggest immense social and economic differentiation, the seeds of the social differentiation we see between elite and non-elite in the Archaic Period (for example, in the poetry of Theognis and Solon) perhaps lie here. Within communities, certain individuals and generational households, whether or not they were aided by previous generations' good fortunes, seem to have been particularly successful economically. I do not, however, mean to imply that all households initially started on a level playing field or that the communities of early Greece were fair-play meritocracies or fostered notions of egalitarianism. The situation of earlier generations of the household and their ability to command resources and limit access to others in the community probably had much to do with the success felt by later generations. After all, the idea that "like produces like" could be reinforced by the continuing social and economic good fortune of certain households even while it explained and furthered it. Such narratives, about success and heroic ancestors, perhaps restrict the path to prosperity of other members of the community, as some generational households were able to transform their success into significant social and political power, namely the ability to exert their will over their communities and to rule the developing *poleis*.²³ That such families belonged to a group comprised of other successful and powerful families, which considered themselves different from the rest of the community, is suggested by the later

use of such terms as *eupatridae* (the well-sired) and *agathoi* (the good), as opposed to *kakoi* (the bad). It is also suggested by specific groups like the *Gamoroi* (those who shared the land) in Syracuse and the Bacchiadae in Corinth, a highly restrictive group probably of around 200 families whose exclusivity seems to have been based on an *idea* of kinship (as opposed to anhistorical common descent) and endogamy.²⁴ Elite groups did restrict access to status at different points in early Greece, but they did not, and could not, do so through ties to “real” ancestors and lineages that could be expressed as genealogies. Who would those real ancestors have been? Perhaps they were those who had been successful in trade and agriculture and increased the size and complexity of their houses, but yet remained the nameless inhabitants of Zagora, Megara Hyblaea, and Old Smyrna. But who would have cared about or remembered these ancestors? Who had been keeping track of who was elite and who was not since the Geometric period? This is not the information passed on in Early Greek genealogical material. In genealogies, elite individuals expressed their worth and so reaffirmed their social status, and probably their civic and political status too, through heroic and divine ancestors, figures about whom stories were told and who were associated with foundations, battles, and monster-slayings.

The idea of descent, therefore, plays into social and civic differentiation in an indirect manner. Elite status was not so much determined by birth, but by the possession of or the ability to show off character and worth in the standards of the day, which could be considered a matter of birth and relatedness (because like produces like). But that relatedness could be claimed or appropriated and the family invented, through methods like genealogical statements. Genealogies were tools of social recognition and differentiation. Individuals and their households sought and invented the family in ways that would enhance or coincide with their prestige and legitimize their power within the community or the *polis*, and hence, their interest in descent.

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Notes

- 1 Ethnologists such as Sir Henry Sumner Maine, Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, Lewis Henry Morgan, John Ferguson McLennan, and Johan Jakob Bachofen (see Voget 1975: 154–6, 292–5; Honigmann 1976: 114–21; Kuper 2005: 37–81).
- 2 Most recently, the problems with evolutionary and neo-evolutionary models based on a nineteenth-century conception of primitivism are presented perhaps most clearly and damningly in Adam Kuper’s *The Invention of Primitive Society* (1988) and revisited in his *The Reinvention of Primitive Society* (2005). Problems have similarly been noted in legal history with the idea of primitive law and the evolution of law, e.g., in Fitzpatrick’s *Mythology of Modern Law* (1992).
- 3 I define this Greek world broadly encompassing anywhere where Greeks settled, even in “mixed” communities, since this period saw not only Greek settlement around the Mediterranean, but also the ongoing development of Greek identity and the political community that would come to be the polis. Where communities appear to have “mixed,” e.g., in some communities in southern Italy, that is taken into account in the interpretation.
- 4 On Homeric society and history see, e.g., Snodgrass 1974; Morris 1986, 1997, 2001; Raaflaub 1997, 1998, 2009.
- 5 Or, as Osborne puts it, “ways of seeing the world” (2009: 149).
- 6 In the Homeric genealogies, *genos* means origin or birth three times (*Il.* 5.544; *Il.* 14.126, 133), once it means lineage (*Il.* 6.209), once it means descendant (*Il.* 21.186), and once it means generation, as in generated from the gods, referring to a monster who is not part of the lineage (*Il.* 6.180). The uses of *genea* in the genealogies in Homer are as follows: birth (*Il.* 14.112); generation (*Il.* 6.146, 149); family in the sense of race or stock (*Il.* 6.211; *Il.* 20.203, 241; *Il.* 21.187; *Od.* 15.225); descendants or offspring in general (*Il.* 21.191); a line or lineage (*Od.* 16.117); and an individual’s generation thought of as a whole, genealogy expressed alongside the idea

of blood (*Il.* 6.151; *Il.* 20.214).

- 7 There are eight passages in Homeric poetry that can be clearly described as genealogical: *Il.* 5.541–9; *Il.* 6.144–211; *Il.* 13.445–54; *Il.* 14.109–27; *Il.* 20.200–41; *Il.* 21.182–91; *Od.* 15.223–57; *Od.* 16.112–21.
- 8 Such descent burials occur, e.g., around the Argolid (Hägg 1974, 1980, 1983), at Nichoria (MacDonald, Coulson, and Rosser 1983: 266), at Vroulia (Morris 1992: 179, 186–7), in the Athenian Agora (Young 1939: 15; Humphreys 1983, 94–5) and Ceramicus (Morris 1987: 130–1; Knigge 1991: 101, 105), around Attica (Humphreys 1983: 101) and at Pithecusae (Ridgway 1992: 46–9, 52–3).
- 9 Examples of such telescoping in Pindar include *Ol.* 2.35–48; *Ol.* 6.24–5 and 28–73; *Ol.* 7.20–38 and 92–4; *Pyth.* 4.247–62; *Nem.* 11.33–7; *Isthm.* 3.13–17b.
- 10 The deepest burials (burial 12 at 1 m with one to two cremations and burial 13 at 1.1 m with two to three cremations) appear to buck the general trend, with few cremations but significant depth. It could be that these burials were meant eventually to be reused similarly to burials 2 and 6, in which up to nine individuals were cremated successively.
- 11 The beginnings of this interpretation lie largely with Grote and Niebuhr in the early nineteenth century, whose work set the standard interpretation of *gens* and *genos* in early Greece and Rome. The addition of burial groups into the equation, however, came with Fustel de Coulanges' *Ancient City* in the later nineteenth century. Fustel de Coulanges' work concerning burials has been strongly refuted by Momigliano (1970), Bourriot (1976), and Humphreys (1983). Direct connection between genealogies and kinship grouping, however, has remained in the scholarship (e.g., Momigliano 1971: 24; Gras 1995: 64–6; Nicolai 2007: 17).
- 12 E.g., at Zagora, Megara Hyblaea, Miletos, and Old Smyrna (Morris 1998; Lang 1996, 2005, 2007; Nevett 2007).
- 13 E.g., Cretan house complexes (Sjögren 2003, 23–5) and attached houses at Zagora (Cambitoglou *et al.* 1988, 154–61).
- 14 Although there is evidence for slow population growth from the Early Iron Age onward, most Early Greek communities remained quite small. See Osborne 2009, 66–76 for an overview of population density in early Greece and Morgan 2009, 56–7 for eighth-century growth. The estimated population of Argos in the Dark Age is 600–1200 and that of Nichoria moves from 85–90 to 200 and back to 100 in different Dark Age phases (Hall 2007: 60–1). Megara Hyblaea had an estimated population of about 225 in 725–700 BCE, reaching 2,275 by the end of the seventh century (De

- Angelis 2003: 44). Pithecusae is thought to have had an exceptionally large population estimated between 5,000–10,000 (Osborne 2009: 107), although Morris puts the number around 4,000 by 700 BCE (Morris 1996: 57).
- 15 The histories of the *genē* (the civic divisions of Classical and Hellenistic Athens) are themselves historicizing myths of the fourth and fifth centuries (Parker 1996: 56–66, 284–327).
 - 16 Donlan (2007: 31) dismisses the etymological background as immaterial, and I agree that there is a limit to which we can push any etymological connection without corroborating evidence.
 - 17 E.g., Momigliano 1971: 24; Finley 1975: 27, 48; Dowden 1992: 10–11; Gras 1995: 64–6; Nicolai 2007: 17. Thomas, although critical of the concept of lengthy inherited familial genealogies, sets genealogies squarely in the realm of family and family tradition (1989: 157).
 - 18 For example, as Fowler argues (1998), in the *Catalogue of Women*, genealogical thinking retrojected contemporary alliances and hegemonies into the legendary past linking Greeks together in a web of mythical ancestor relationships.
 - 19 The alternation of story-telling and the recounting of descent or ancestry relationships is present throughout almost all Early Greek genealogical material, with the exception of a very few late cases from the fifth century, which could represent a change in genealogical tradition or the way genealogical material was recorded in the writing of history.
 - 20 The genealogy of Glaukos, e.g., encompasses 68 lines of poetry, 47 of which are dedicated to the story of Bellerophon (*Il.* 6.156–202). The *Catalogue of Women* similarly combines stories and descent information.
 - 21 What is being described, however, is not a meritocracy or egalitarian community as envisioned by some early ethnologists (e.g., Morgan 1877: 247), in which any one with talent can advance socially and economically, but a world in which family and wealth gave access to advancement but did not confer it.
 - 22 The identification of the structure as domestic has been challenged by Kourou, who plausibly suggests it had a cult function (2002: 65).
 - 23 E.g., the rise of the Bacchiadae at Corinth (Thomas and Conant 1999: 122–3).
 - 24 See Donlan 1997: 44–5, on the names elites give themselves and give others. See Hall 2007: 129–31, on the appearance and development of elitist terminology from “incipient socioeconomic connotations” in

Homeric poetry to its abundance in Archaic poetry, especially that of Theognis, Solon, and Alcaeus. On the Gamoroi at Syracuse: Murray 1993: 115; Rutter 2000: 138–41. On the Bacchiadae at Corinth: Murray 1993: 53, 146–50; Snodgrass 1980: 92; Thomas and Conant 1999: 123; Hall 2007: 136–7.

The Role of the Extended Family in Exacting Blood Revenge in Classical Athens¹

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At the heart of Athenian conceptions of revenge is the image of Orestes, the dutiful son who avenges his father. For many, Orestes' revenge is the archetypal act of revenge in which a close family member slaughters the man who killed his father (e.g., Burnett 1998: 113. See Homer *Od.* 3.196–8; Aristotle *Rhet.* 1401a38b1). The story is richly represented in extant tragedy, and the image was potent enough to form the backbone of a homicide prosecution written by Antiphon in which a young son depicts himself as Orestes avenging his father's death by prosecuting his stepmother for homicide (see esp. 1.17; Apostolakis 2007). Much attention has also been paid to the character of Electra who plays a key role in egging on her brother to take revenge in tragic versions of the myth. In particular, it has been noted that she places the cause of her natal kin and the need for revenge for her father ahead of her own marriage (see e.g., Blundell 1989: Chapter 5; Burnett 1998: Chapters 4, 5 and 9; Foley 2001: Chapter 5; McHardy 2004: 108–10, 2008: 108–9). However less attention has been given to Pylades who is shown as a steadfast supporter of Orestes helping him to achieve revenge in all the surviving tragic versions. In this chapter I examine when and how those outside the nuclear family become involved in blood revenge starting with the involvement of Pylades in Orestes' revenge as it is depicted in Greek literary sources. Analysis of the different versions of the story reveals contemporary expectations regarding the relationship of Pylades to Orestes which can be seen to be driven by expectations of classical Athenians regarding who was involved in the pursuit of revenge and what actions they took. This analysis is used to shed further light on the scholarly debate over the nature of the role that the extended family, including distant agnates, cognates, and affines, played in taking revenge for homicide through the law courts at Athens.² I suggest that extended kin did not stand back while the nuclear family pursued revenge for murder, but that they played a pivotal role in supporting their kin and could take an active role in achieving revenge side-by-side with close agnates.

Pylades and Orestes

The story of Orestes' return from exile to kill his mother Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus, who have seized the throne after killing her husband Agamemnon, features in extant plays by all three of the major tragedians. In the three plays which focus on the matricide (A. *Choe.*, S. *El.*, and E. *El.*) as well as two others which discuss subsequent events, (E. *IT* and *Or.*) Orestes is accompanied by Pylades with whom he was brought up in exile. The tragedians depict the support offered by Pylades as crucial in encouraging Orestes to achieve revenge by killing his mother. In Aeschylus' version, as has often been noted by scholars, Pylades' only lines create a strong dramatic effect and it is Pylades' words that drive on Orestes to achieve revenge for his father at a point when he doubts he can go through with the act (A. *Choe.* 900–2; see Knox 1972; Nisetich 1986: 53). But what is seldom noted is that it is to Pylades whom Orestes turns to ask for help at this crucial moment (899). Earlier in the play, in a speech in which Orestes discusses how he will achieve his revenge by trickery (556–9), Pylades is also made a central part of Orestes' plans to achieve entry into the house unrecognized (560–4). In Sophocles' version Pylades is mute throughout, but Orestes' and Electra's words suggest that Pylades takes an active part both in the supplication of Agamemnon and in the killing of Clytemnestra (S. *El.* 1372–6; 1398–1401). In Euripides' version too Orestes includes a silent Pylades in his plans for revenge (E. *El.* 107–11) and Pylades is rewarded by a jubilant Electra for sharing an equal part in the contest with Orestes (886–9). He is also said to defend Orestes following the killing of Aegisthus (844–7). In Euripides' *Orestes* it is said that Pylades devised the revenge against Aegisthus as well as supporting Orestes in taking revenge (1159–60; cf. E. *Or.* 33; 460).³ In this play he is portrayed not only supporting Orestes, but taking the lead in devising and enacting revenge against their perceived enemy Menelaus (E. *Or.* 1105; 1150; 1555; 1563; 1566. Cf. Nisetich 1986: 51; Burnett 1998: 254). He further suggests that he will undertake revenge on Orestes' behalf (σοὶ γὰρ τιμωρὸν μένος) without any dread of death (1117). As Griffith (1995: 94) has noted in discussing the *Choephoroe*: "Pylades is indispensable to Orestes. His support must be recognized as being not only moral, psychological, and religious (as modern critics have made it), but also military, material, and political." The same point can also be made of Pylades' role in his other tragic incarnations where he is shown actively involved in planning and exacting revenge alongside Orestes.

In all three playwrights it is clear that Orestes has a close bond with Pylades and relies on him for support in achieving revenge. However Pylades' relationship to Orestes is not consistently represented. It is clear in all the versions that Orestes was raised together with Pylades from childhood (see also Apollod. *Epit.* 6.24–5; Pind. *P.* 11.34; Hyg. *Fab.* 117). Agamemnon is said to be a guest-friend of Pylades' father Strophius and scholars have

suggested that the choice of abode for Orestes was selected based upon the obligation of *xenoi* to care for each other's children in times of need (Belfiore 2000: 7; Golden 1990: 144; Herman 1997: 22). Orestes and Pylades inherit this guest-friendship from their fathers and Pylades is described as Orestes' *xenos* by all three playwrights (e.g., ξένος τε καὶ δορυξενος δόμων – A. *Choe.* 562; σὺ φίλτατε ξένων – S. *El.* 15; φίλον ξένον τ' ἔμοι – E. *El.* 83). At the same time, the young men are dear companions to one another and express the closeness of their bond through use of the word *philos* and its superlative *philtatos* when addressing one another.⁴ The close nature of their companionship is particularly well evoked by Orestes in Euripides' *IT*, where he refers to Pylades as "dearest of dear ones" (φίλτατόν ... φίλων – 708–10) and recalls that the pair grew up together, hunted together, and shared misfortunes. The bond formed by these shared experiences in youth is kin-like in its nature in that the pair lived together and shared common adolescent experiences, such as hunting, in the way that brothers do. The formal relationship of *xenia*, which is already presumed to be kin-like even between men living in foreign lands,⁵ has created an even stronger bond between the two young men because they have shared an upbringing.

The idea that boys who are raised together will form a close kin-like bond is a familiar one in Greek literature. In particular, the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus is in many ways analogous to the one between Orestes and Pylades in that the pair were raised together and formed a particularly strong bond which is in many ways depicted as kin-like in the *Iliad*.⁶ As Donlan (1985: 300) notes: "Such slurred distinctions between 'friends,' 'companions,' and kin are frequent in the epic. To cite only the most famous example: the emotional attachments between Achilles and Patroclus (*Il.* 17. 411, 655 – πολὺν φίλτατος ἑταῖρος) in life and Achilles' obligations to Patroclus dead (funeral rites, burial, blood vengeance) were precisely those due and expected between close blood relatives."⁷ In addition to this conceptual link, Glotz (1904: 85–93) also made the linguistic link between *etes* and *hetairos* in Homer making the companions of heroes their paternal kinsmen (cf. Miller 1953: 47). Certainly it is made clear that extended kin such as cousins could be living together when Phoenix says that he had many cousins and relatives living in his father's house who begged him not to leave home (*Il.* 9.464–5) suggesting that extended kin were thought to congregate together and to defend one another.

I have argued elsewhere that there is an expectation that families will select kin when sending a child into exile during difficult times or following a homicide. This idea manifests itself in certain mythic variants. While there is no explicit reference to any kinship between Achilles and Patroclus in the *Iliad*, elsewhere Patroclus is depicted as Achilles' cousin. In Hesiod, Peleus father of Achilles and Menoetius father of Patroclus are said to be brothers (Eustathius *Hom.* 112.44ff; *Catalogue of Women* fr. 212a M–W) making their

sons first cousins. Alternatively Achilles' great-grandmother Aegina is said to be Patroclus' grandmother (P. *O.* 9.69–70) making them first cousins once removed. For some ancients it appeared logical that Menoetius would take his young son to a kinsman for protection after he killed a boy. In his explanation of the myth of Atreus, Thucydides makes clear that Atreus chose a kinsman, in this case his sister's son Eurystheus, to shelter him from his father's wrath after he murdered Chrysippus (Thuc. 1.9.2). In Euripides' *Hecuba*, Polydorus, the youngest son of Priam and Hecuba is said to have been given for safe-keeping into the family of Polymestor a *xenos* of his father (1–9). In other versions of the myth the *xenos* Polymestor is married to Priam's daughter Iliona and so Polydorus is sent to live with his sister (Hyg. *Fab.* 109).⁸ Just so Orestes is sent to the home of Strophius, his father's *xenos*, and in some versions, Strophius is married to Agamemnon's sister (E. *IT* 918–19; Hyg. *Fab.* 117; Paus. 2.29.4), making Pylades and Orestes first cousins.⁹ Plutarch suggested that the term *doryxenos* (which is applied to Strophius in Aeschylus' play) referred to a former enemy who was now a friend (Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 17; see Rocchi 2005; cf. Herman 1987, 11 n. 3, 57). Marriage alliances are a way that former enemies can indicate the end of their hostility and their newly formed truce (Hdt. 1.60–1; 5.18–21; Isoc. 7.12, 17.11; McHardy 2008: 20–1). Alternatively the decision to marry out your daughter to a friendly family abroad with a view to mutual protection is conceived of as a sensible decision (E. *Ion* 293–6; Thuc. 2.29.3; see Herman 1987: 36; Gallant 1991: 155). Such views as these could explain why some conceptualized Strophius as Agamemnon's brother-in-law as well as his *xenos*.

The notion of raising cousins together when circumstances were difficult was a familiar one at Athens and potentially had an effect on the presentation of Orestes and Pylades in Euripides' plays. Charmides was said to have been brought up from a young age in the home of his cousin Andocides (Andoc. 1.48), while the speaker of Lysias 3 *Against Simon* refers to the fact that he has taken in his sister and her children after the death of her husband and they are living at his house (3.6). Likewise Aristarchus mentions to Socrates that he has taken in female relatives from outside the *oikos* during a time of crisis (Xen. *Mem.* 2.7.2). A similar situation is represented in Menander's *Aspis* where female cousins are brought up together because the brother of one of the girls has gone abroad to fight, leaving his sister in the care of her uncle (122–9). In Euripides' *Orestes* Hermione is said to have been brought by her father to live with her aunt and cousins after her mother departed for Troy (E. *Or.* 63–6). These plays appear to reflect the same kinds of situations regarding reliance on extended kin in times of need as are alluded to in the other contemporary works. It appears that at least during the period in which most of these works were written towards the end of the fifth century and first part of the fourth century BCE, extended kin at Athens were expected to play an important role in a crisis offering moral and material support to their kin, especially to vulnerable relatives such as minors and females (cf. Gallant

In addition, since inheritance was partible at Athens brothers would have divided an estate meaning that frequently cousins would also have been neighbors (Humphreys 1986: 59). Such cousins would surely play together and be raised together forming the kind of bond described for Orestes and Pylades discussed above (E. *IT* 708–10).¹⁰ Daughters typically married away from home, although some writers suggest that it was prudent for a man to marry his daughters nearby so that his marriage kin could be of use to him in times of need (Thuc. 2.29.3).¹¹ However some men chose kin for their daughters, typically an uncle or cousin, meaning that daughters sometimes lived in close proximity to their natal kin if they married their father’s brother or his son.

Euripides portrays Pylades and Orestes as marrying their cousins Electra and Hermione in his plays (*Or.* 1658–9; cf. also E. *El.* 1284–5, 1340–1). In the case of Hermione, she is cousin to Orestes on both sides in that their fathers are brothers and their mothers are sisters. In Euripides’ *Andromache* Orestes acts as the protector of his cousin Hermione and rescues her from difficulty both because of the kinship between the pair and because of his desire to marry her. Indeed, Orestes emphasizes that it is preferable for him to take a bride who is kin as she will accept his current misfortune (974–5) and “in difficult times, there is nothing better than a friend who is kin” (985–6 – ἔν τε τοῖς κακοῖς οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν κρεῖσσον οἰκείου φίλου). This example shows clearly the possibility for interconnectedness of types of kinship and how this overlap could be seen as advantageous. Again the depiction of endogamy and its advantages in these plays seems to have been influenced by contemporary attitudes towards relationships between extended kin at Athens. As Cox (1998: 212) has pointed out, the *oikos* relied upon extended kin to protect itself through marriage, guardianship, and adoption. Examples of endogamy (usually between cousins) are not infrequent in our texts and in the case of inheritance by an *epikleros*, kin marriage is prescribed by law.¹² Demosthenes (27.5) informs us that there was an expectation that the bond of kinship became even stronger when combined with the bond of marriage.¹³ Similarly Euripides suggests that the layers of relationship between Pylades and Orestes strengthen their bond when he makes Pylades address Orestes as “dearest to me of my age mates, friends, and relatives. For you are all these things to me” (φιλαθὲρ ἡλικῶν ἐμοὶ/καὶ φίλων καὶ συγγενείας; πάντα γὰρ τὰδ’ εἴ σύ μοι – *Or.* 732–3).

This doubling of relationships where a man is both the cousin and the brother-in-law to his wife’s brother in addition to having other possible connections such as friendship, being a foster brother, or being a *xenos* (as in the case of Orestes and Pylades in Euripides’ plays) demonstrates the potential for great complexity in concepts of kinship at Athens (see esp. E. *Or.* 732–3; cf. Cox 1998). The level of interconnectedness of kin relationships can clearly be seen

in Humphreys' analysis of kin support in Attic court cases since the same examples recur through her different kin categories. However which of these relationships or which combination of these relationships should be conceived of as being the primary driving force in motivating a man to take revenge is less clear. Humphreys (1986: 67, 76, 88) argues that the incidence of affines in the evidence can be explained by the influence that a man's close female kin such as sisters and daughters had in persuading their husbands to act on their behalf in support of their natal kin. Significantly, though, Humphreys tends to omit the impact of endogamy from her discussion meaning that it is far from conclusive that a man acts because of the desire of his wife, as she suggests, rather than because of feelings of kinship on his own part.¹⁴ Similarly some scholars suggest that *philia* can be seen as concentric circles of kin ("ripples on a pond") with nuclear family at the center then grandparents, uncles, and cousins, then second cousins, relatives by marriage, and finally unrelated friends on the outside (Blundell 1989: 39–46; Phillips 2008: 27). However the doubling of relationships where two individuals might be related in different degrees by blood and by marriage indicates that this model might not have been what Athenians conceived of when thinking of family relationships.¹⁵ At the same time circumstances such as being raised as neighbors or in the same household could have influenced the way that a bond between relatives was perceived.

To return to the case of Pylades, it would be difficult to make the case that he supports Orestes and takes an active part in the revenge act mainly because of Electra's desire for revenge. While she is consistently characterized as eager for revenge and while Euripides says that the pair marry after the revenge has taken place, it is clear from the analysis of the relationship between Pylades and Orestes above that the affinal link between the pair is only part of a complex web of ideas which can explain the construction of their relationship in Euripides' plays. That Pylades is supportive of Orestes as a *xenos* is clear from Aeschylus' play. Griffith (1995: 90) has argued that in Aeschylus' play the institution of *xenia* is central to Orestes' success in regaining his father's throne and it is only through the aristocratic network of *xenia* that he can achieve his revenge. However, the notion that they are in fact cousins may have rung true for Athenians based on the choice of abode for the child Orestes, the intimacy of the men's relationship and Pylades' active involvement in the revenge (cf. McHardy 2008: 30). It is my contention that Euripides' presentation of the relationship between Pylades and Orestes reflected thoughts and feelings regarding taking revenge at the time of composition towards the end of the fifth century BCE and as a consequence the example can throw light on the considerable debate regarding the role of extended kin in exacting revenge at this time at Athens.

Vengeance for Kin at Athens

My focus in this section is on the role of kin in prosecutions of homicide – the legal parallel of the blood revenge act depicted by the playwrights discussed above. While there is a scholarly consensus that close male agnates were the most likely to prosecute in cases of homicide, there is a lack of agreement concerning when and how extended kin became involved, and concerning whether anyone other than relatives could prosecute in homicide cases. Of utmost significance in the discussion is the part of the law of homicide referring to the prosecution of the killer which has survived in Ps.-

Demosthenes 43 (*Against Macartatus*): “Proclamation is to be made to the killer in the Agora by relatives as far as cousinhood and cousin; the prosecution is to be shared by cousins, sons of cousins, sons-in-law, fathers-in-law, and members of the phratry” (προειπεῖν τῷ κτείναντι ἐν ἀγορᾷ ἐντὸς ἀνεπιότῃτος καὶ ἀνεπιουῖ, συνδιώκειν δὲ καὶ ἀνεπιουὺς καὶ ἀνεπιῶν παῖδας καὶ γαμβροὺς καὶ πενθεροὺς καὶ φράτερας – Dem. 43. 57 = IG I³ 104.20–23; trans. MacDowell 1989: 18–19).

Scholars have noted that this law is one in which the *anchisteia* is shown to have a legal function.¹⁶ The law indicates that a range of relatives including close agnates, extended kin and men with a more distant kin connection (phratry members) are to be involved in the prosecution, however a smaller group of men up to the degree of sons of cousins is said to make a proclamation naming the killer in the *agora*. MacDowell (1963: 18) suggests that the closer set of kin who make the proclamation are responsible for initiating legal action, while the larger group only give support to the closer group of kin when required (cf. Gagarin 1981: 55; Hunter 1993: 102 n. 1). Roy (1999: 3) suggests that the revenge fell to the *anchisteia* only if a man had no direct descendants, a view which seems to draw heavily on the maxim regarding the desirability of a son to exact revenge used in reference to Orestes in the *Odyssey* (3.196–8). Hunter (1993: 102) argues that the priority fell first to close agnates and only afterwards to other kin. However Phillips (2008: 54–6) has made the case that the law of homicide is composed in such a way as to require solidarity among family members within specified degrees both when they issue the proclamation that they intend to pursue the killer with legal action and when they decide to pardon a killer (IG I³ 104.13–16). He hypothesizes that solidarity is required at these points to demonstrate that no family member is still set on taking revenge into his own hands (cf. Davies 1977/8: 108).¹⁷ Rubinstein (2000: 87) further postulates that the law seeks joint prosecution by relatives in cases of homicide. Support for this view can be found in Antiphon 5 (*On the Murder of Herodes*) where Euxitheus argues that since he is being prosecuted unjustly by Herodes’ family (τῶν ἐκείνου ἀναγκαίων) and the prosecution are attempting to put him to death, the prosecution might more justly be prosecuted by his own family (τῶν ἐμοὶ προσηκόντων) for his murder (5.59). This statement demonstrates an

expectation of prosecution for homicide by a family collectively, although it is also clear that there is a lead prosecutor on the opposing side. Indeed throughout the speech the prosecution team is referred to as “they” (οἱ) and family solidarity in the pursuit of a murderer is suggested even though the normal procedures for homicide cases are not being followed, but the defendant is instead being tried for malefaction (5.9).

Other surviving speeches concerning homicide indicate that groups of relatives were routinely involved in prosecuting for homicide at Athens. In Antiphon 6 (*On the Chorister*), another defense speech, a key prosecutor is named as Philocrates the brother of the victim, but throughout the speech the prosecution team is referred to in the plural (e.g., 6.16 διωμόσαντο δὲ οὔτοι μὲν ἀποκτεῖναι με Διόδοτον – “they swore that I killed Diodotus”; 6.34 παρεσκευάζοντο αἰτιᾶσθαι καὶ προαγορεύειν εἰργεσθαι τῶν νομίμων – “they began to prepare to charge me and make a proclamation for me to avoid legal things”). Similarly in Lysias 1 (*On the Murder of Eratosthenes*) a team of prosecutors is mentioned (1.27), presumably members of Eratosthenes’ family, although it is not made clear which ones. An exception to this expectation is the prosecution speech Antiphon 1 (*On the Poisoning by the Stepmother*) where a young man apparently acts alone in prosecuting his stepmother. In this case, though, family is pitted against family as he makes clear. His opponents are his half-brothers who defend their mother (1.1). This case depicts a fight within the family and the problem that the very kin who would be involved together in the prosecution of homicide normally are fighting for the defense is highlighted early in the speech (1.2). It appears that other kin were not inclined to become involved in this dispute.

In another instance of a prosecution speech, this time following the use of the *apagoge* procedure, we can see how kin collaborated to prosecute. The speaker of Lysias 13 (*Against Agoratus*) tells how Dionysodorus, imprisoned and put to death under the Thirty, instructed his kin to avenge his death.¹⁸ When visited by his wife in jail, he tells her that Agoratus was responsible and charges the speaker (his wife’s brother who is also his cousin), his brother, and other relatives to avenge him (cf. also Antiph. 1.29–30). He also instructs her to tell their as yet unborn child (if male) to avenge his father (Lys. 13.41–2).¹⁹ In this speech the emphasis is placed on the significance of the appeal of a man about to die to ensure that vengeance is exacted. However at the same time the speaker suggests that Dionysodorus asked for revenge from an extensive range of relatives including nuclear family (his son and brother), extended kin (his cousin/brother-in-law), and other relatives, not that he requested extended kin to act only if closer kin did not or could not. It is clear that the case is brought by a combination of extended kin and nuclear family. Dionysius the victim’s brother requested the arrest (13.86) and possibly spoke after his cousin.²⁰ The speaker of the surviving speech is both cousin and brother-in-law to the victim, because Dionysodorus was married to a cousin,

the speaker's sister. In addition other friends are alluded to as taking part in the prosecution to achieve revenge (13.90). Further the speaker argues that the dying injunctions of the executed men to avenge their murders extend to the jurors too as their friends, not only to their blood relatives (13.92, 94).

When analyzing this case to understand the implications for the role of extended kin in exacting revenge, scholars have come to opposing conclusions. Phillips (2008: 201) argues that the speaker's connection by marriage is less significant than his connection by blood since the blood connection better fits Athenian expectations concerning revenge for homicide. This argument fits his theory of "concentric circles" of kin in which male agnates would act first, followed by in-laws and then by those more distantly related. Humphreys, on the other hand, suggests (1986: 77, 79) that the speaker acts on behalf of his sister because she would have been unable to avenge her husband herself. This theory fits her idea that a nuclear family member (i.e., a sister) is most likely to act in such cases. However as Rubinstein (2000: 131–2) has pointed out the speaker makes clear that he is acting as someone who has been personally affected right at the beginning of his speech (13.1) where he spells out the dual nature of his relationship to Dionysodorus. He does not state that he is doing a favor either for Dionysius or for his sister. Rubinstein argues: "The tie of solidarity uniting the relatives and friends of the murdered Dionysodorus is emphasized throughout the speech, and the obligation placed on the relatives of Dionysodorus to bring his murderer to justice is represented as the main reason for our speaker's appearance in court (13.41–2, 92)." This view fits her theory, for which the evidence has been set out above, that prosecutions for homicide would usually have been brought by a group of kinsmen expressing their solidarity to their dead relative. Here though, unlike in most of the other cases, we have evidence of the identity of two of the participants in the trial and it is clear that the men support one another in attempting to achieve revenge for their dead relative although one is a member of the nuclear family and one is an extended kinsman. Like Orestes and Pylades in Euripides' plays the speaker and Dionysius are cousins. It is possible that they have grown up in close proximity as suggested above. Certainly there have been cousin marriages within the family suggesting an even closer bond between family members. Instead of attempting to extricate which was the key motivating factor in the speaker's desire to prosecute and avenge his kinsman, it is better to notice the layers of kinship between the men involved in this case and reflect on the possibility that Athenians conceptualized blood revenge as a task for a group of kin, related by different degrees, rather than a solitary avenger.

In the cases discussed so far it appears that prosecutions are pursued by kinsmen of the victims, although in some examples it is unclear which relatives were involved. Speakers also appeal to jury members to act as friends of the victim and ensure revenge for him (Antiph. 1.3; Lys 13.92, 94).

However it remains unclear what would happen in cases where kin lacked close relatives or enfranchised relatives who could act on their behalf. Evidence suggests that those in this position would most likely be left unavenged (Davies 1977/8: 108; Gagarin 1986: 15). In Demosthenes 47 (*Against Evergus and Mnesibulus*), a case which is much cited as evidence on the possibility of prosecution by non-relatives for murder, a man is told that he should not attempt to prosecute those responsible for the death of his old nurse, because she is neither a relative nor a slave of his (47.70). Instead, he is advised to avenge himself in some other way (ἀλλῇ δὲ εἰς πῇ βούλει, τιμωροῦ) which he proceeds to do by prosecuting two of those involved for false witnesses. The advice given by the *exegetai* as related by the speaker in this case is far from clear and does not readily provide answers about whether non-kin could prosecute for homicide. There has been considerable debate among scholars on this issue, and concerning the question of whether a *graphe phonou* or an *apagoge phonou*, allowing anyone to prosecute, existed (MacDowell 1963: 17–19, 133–4, 1978: 111; Gagarin 1979; Todd 1993: 272–3; Hansen 1981; cf. Burnett 1998: 53 n.61; Tulin 1996). Panagiotou (1974: 430) argues against the idea that only relatives could prosecute as pollution was in the interest of all Athenians. The use of *apagoge* to arrest a killer who frequented the holy places and the market place (Dem. 23.80), was open to all, but in these cases, too, kin might have been expected to prosecute. Certainly we do not have evidence of non-kin prosecuting in trials for homicide, although other options were open as is clear from Demosthenes 47 where the speaker suggests that he pursued revenge by prosecuting the aggressors in a different type of trial. It is made clear that the dead woman acted as nurse to the speaker, so he had been raised with her as a child. The closeness of their relationship can be inferred from his decision to take her back into his house after her husband died (47.55–6). It is suggested that the bonds that had grown through shared residence in this example led to a desire for revenge by this speaker, although he was not related to his nurse by blood (47.72). It is possible that the expectation of such feelings generated by shared residence underlies the central role of this story in a case about a completely different matter and would have been expected to find sympathy from jury members.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests certain expectations regarding the role of kin in taking revenge for homicide in Classical Athens. While it is clear that close agnates such as sons, brothers, and fathers were expected to desire revenge for their kin, revenge is not conceptualized as the sole duty of the nuclear family, but close agnates work together with more distant kin

including more distant agnates, cognates, and affines to prosecute homicide at Athens. In both myth as presented on stage and legal evidence, revenge is portrayed as a collective action in which men act together and seek help and support from others to ensure vengeance for their dead kinsmen. The mythical renditions of Orestes' revenge show him relying on the support of Pylades who is depicted by Euripides as being closely related to Orestes through blood, marriage, *xenia*, and through their shared experiences in adolescence, all factors which motivate Pylades to help Orestes achieve revenge. In Euripides' plays too, Pylades is shown actively planning and pursuing revenge as well as supporting Orestes. Similarly in *Against Agoratus*, members of nuclear family and extended family depict themselves as acting together to get revenge for their kinsman and they seek support in achieving revenge from other friends and the members of the jury to help them achieve their aim. It is my contention that the evidence presented in this chapter provides support for the notion that Athenians expected extended kinsmen to act in solidarity when seeking revenge for the death of a relative rather than expecting the nuclear family to act in isolation. At the same time it is my belief that these expectations regarding the role of relatives in revenge have seeped into Euripides' portrayal of Orestes' revenge, making him show Pylades as a blood relative and future affinal kinsman of Orestes, reflecting contemporary ideas concerning how extended kin participated in blood revenge through the courts at Athens, supporting and actively aiding their kin.

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Notes

- 1 I would like to thank Mike Edwards and Richard Seaford for their comments on drafts of this chapter.
- 2 See esp. Phillips (2008: 23–4) for prosecution of homicide as revenge. Cf. Burnett 1998: xvii; Cohen 1995; Gagarin 1986: 115; Kurihara 2003: 466; McHardy 2008: 2–3.
- 3 Pylades’ role in planning the revenge against Clytemnestra and Aegisthus and his active part in exacting it are also emphasized by Hyginus (*Fab.* 119).
- 4 On the breadth of the term *philos* covering kin and friends see esp. Belfiore (2000: 20) who rejects the arguments of Konstan (1996) for a limit on the meaning of the noun *philos*. See also Blundell 1989: 40; Millet 1991: 109–26; Perdicoyianni 1996; Phillips 2008: 26.
- 5 A *xenos* is like a brother (*Od.* 8.546–7). Cf. Aristotle *NE* 8.12. See Donlan 1985: 300; Herman 1987: 16–29.
- 6 Shay (1994: xxi) sees Patroclus as a “foster-brother”.
- 7 On the depiction of Achilles’ revenge for Patroclus and their relationship, see McHardy (2008: 29–34).
- 8 This theme could well have featured in an Attic tragedy as it does in Pacuvius’ *Iliona* (frs 199–201 Warmington). See McHardy (2005: 149). The theme is absent from the *Iliad* where Polydorus fights at Troy and dies in battle (20.407–18).
- 9 Jebb (1894) suggests that Hesiod knew of their kinship since he mentions

that Anaxibia was the sister of Menelaus and Agamemnon (Tzetzes, *Exeg. in Iliad.*: 68, 20).

- 10 Aristotle notes the similarity of cousins and brothers (*NE* 1161b35–1162a4).
- 11 Hesiod (*Op.* 700) says that distant in-laws take too long to arrive and help. See Cox (1998: Chapter 1) on patterns of location in marriage alliances. Cf. Glotz (1904: 80); Gallant (1991: 158) on the usefulness of neighbors in a crisis.
- 12 See Thompson (1967: 279–81) on motives for cousin marriage. Cf. Lacey 1968: 106; Littman 1979: 20–4; Cox 1988; Hunter 1993: 115; Hunter 1994: 14.
- 13 Although this expectation is not met in this particular case.
- 14 Gallant (1991: [Chapter 2](#)); Hunter (1993: 101) criticize Humphreys for downplaying extended kin.
- 15 Phillips (2008: 27 n. 45) concedes this point.
- 16 Its other key function is in cases of inheritance. See Harrison 1968: 143; Lacey 1968: 22–3; Davies 1977/8: 108; Gould 1980, 44; Roy 1999: 3; Lape 2002–3: 124.
- 17 This concept of solidarity among kin in revenge, including through the courts in Athens, was argued for early in the twentieth century by Glotz (1904: 68).
- 18 See Phillips (2008: [Chapter 7](#)) for detailed discussion of this case.
- 19 See McHardy (2004) on this case.
- 20 Humphreys (1986: 73) suggests Dionysius made a speech after the present one.

5

Domestic Architecture in Ephesus from the Hellenistic Period to Late Antiquity

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The terms “family” and “household,” seen from an archaeological standpoint, can be completely interlinked,¹ but do not, however, depend on each other. The formation of familial structures can be observed even before mankind settled into communities, at a time when one can speak of “household” only in a figurative sense and not in an actual one, as an organizational unit which was linked to a specific place. In what follows an attempt will be made to approach the family as an organizational unit inhabiting one house and living there; it must be kept in mind that, in spite of diverse information, the actors, the humans, can only be approached to a limited extent.

Ephesus can certainly offer potentially rich source material for this theme, due to its historical development (archaeological findings and results, anthropological finds, epigraphic sources), yet the point of departure is extremely heterogeneous because of the multifaceted and diverse research concentrations and approaches in the course of 120 years of excavation history. In carrying out this study the author is limited here to that material which has been discovered in the course of excavations in the area of private domestic architecture, and the statements and conclusions presented in the framework of this contribution must be viewed against this background.

At the outset we should concern ourselves with the development of the settlement up until the Hellenistic era, in order to reconstruct, at least rudimentarily, the structure, organization, and composition of the social fabric.

The earliest indications of human activity can be traced back to the seventh millennium BCE. To the southeast of the later Hellenistic-Roman city a settlement grew up in the area of the so-called Çukuriçi Höyük (Figure 5.1, no. 1); here only partial segments of those structures which can be classified as belonging to this settlement phase could be excavated. A built-up area was revealed, characterized by larger structures with communally used courtyards as zones of activity. Without being able to go more deeply into the specifics of the findings, this can be understood as a society characterized by a subsistence economy; conclusive statements regarding its composition and development are without doubt not yet possible – nor can it be ascertained whether we are

dealing with a cluster of “nuclear family households” or “extended family households.”

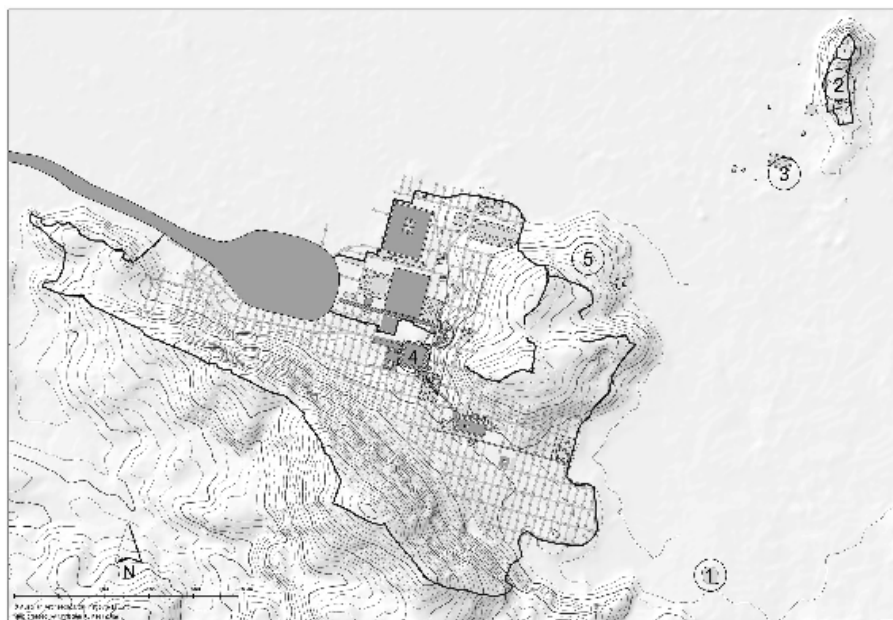


Figure 5.1 Areas with pre-Hellenistic domestic architecture: (1) Çukuriçi Höyük; (2) Ayasoluk; (3) Artemision; (4) Tetragonos Agora; (5) settlement at the Panayırdağ.

The next archaeologically investigated and truly verifiable settlement phase can be assigned to the Early Bronze Age (2900 to 2750 BCE); in this case the archeological findings allow much more to be said regarding processes and lifestyle habits. Here Çukuriçi Höyük offers a picture of a densely built-up settlement with open pathways, on either side of which rectangular domestic structures extend in a strung-together fashion. The find materials reflect processes which, on the one hand, indicate domestic activities such as the preparation of foodstuffs and the production of textiles, while, on the other hand, suggest – with regard to ovens – that industrial processes took place within domestic society. The association here between the domestic and the working environment can be impressively seen (Horejs *et al.* 2011: 31–66., especially 43–8).

After the settlement on the tell, which in the meantime had grown by many meters, was abandoned, a settlement continuum on an elevated site nearby can be postulated, namely on the Ayasoluk (Figure 5.1, no. 2), though its structure can hardly be recognized because of later (Byzantine and Seljuk) building activity. In the main, finds from here provide evidence for settlement activity, whereas graves in the inhabited area of this probable settlement provide a chronological reference point for activity in the Late Bronze Age (ca.1500–1100 BCE) (Scherrer 2006: 59 n. 3; Stock *et al.* 2014).

In the absence of settlement archaeological findings, neither detailed nor generalizing statements can be made here regarding familial structure and the organization of households. Findings which, however, cannot be assigned more closely to the archaeological record attest to early settlement activity also in the area of the later Artemision (Figure 5.1, no. 3).

The next recognizable archaeological evidence indicates a picture of numerous scattered settlements in the Archaic to Classical period; these were probably linked to each other politically, yet they had a definitively connecting element, the common sanctuary of the Artemision (Kerschner 2016). The various settlement phases in the area beneath the imperial period commercial market, the Tetragonos Agora (Figure 5.1, no. 4), attest to domestic activity which began in the eighth century BCE (Scherrer 2006). At first these consisted of single-room structures with rectangular – with the exception of one oval – ground plan. The scheme of the development reveals individual buildings standing loosely next to each other; nevertheless, it is not completely clear from the findings if we are dealing here with an ensemble of a number of structures belonging to a single household, or if each structure should be viewed as representing an individual organizational entity – a household. The analysis of the ceramic finds, however, suggests the latter (von Miller in press). In the following settlement phase, in addition to smaller, not completely excavated houses, there also existed a smaller, single-room house (4.85×4.15 m) as well as a building measuring 10.20×5.20 m: its ground plan can be divided into a main room and an anteroom, suggesting, at least rudimentarily, a differentiated form of residence, since hearths and find materials indicate that these were used for living spaces. Subsequent alterations indicate that the pattern of usage changed, although from the archaeological record it cannot be determined if this was caused by altered familial circumstances. The next building phase is characterized by generously laid-out structures (at least 16.00×12.00 m) with differentiated, four-part ground plans, some of which also had courtyards; these structures fell out of use by the mid-sixth century BCE at the latest.

Additional settlement evidence of the fifth century BCE is found on a plateau in the northern area of the Panayırdağ (Figure 5.1, no. 5) (Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut 2008: 20–1, 2009: 18–9, 2010: 42–3). In addition to a variety of finds which can be interpreted in connection with settlement activity, two late Classical courtyard houses with single rooms have been excavated. The basic structure of these buildings suggests either that their inhabitants placed no value on a differentiated form of domestic architecture, or that a more elaborate form of private residential architecture was not possible. With the end of settlement activity recognizable in this area, a new epoch in the urban development of Ephesus was introduced.

The advent and in particular the departure of Alexander the Great had a great impact on settlement development, as it did throughout the entire Greek *koiné*.

If until that time a number of smaller settlements had existed – attested both archaeologically and in the written sources – afterwards, at the time of the battles for succession of the Diadochi, a central site was laid out whose inhabitants were compelled to settle in this new foundation through synoicism. This city was created on the drawing board, though the greater part of the Hellenistic settlement fell victim to the building activity of the later Roman imperial period. Finds from the area of Terrace House 1 (Lang-Auinger 1996: 86–92) (Figure 5.2, no. 1) and Terrace House 2 (Thür 2014: 121–3; Thür *et al.* 2014: 833–6) (Figure 5.2, no. 2) can be defined as residential structures from the Hellenistic period. In addition, the origins of the *domus* above the Great Theater (Thür 2002)² (Figure 5.2, no. 3) can be assigned to this time. These buildings can be consistently identified as peristyle houses, the standard type of upscale residential architecture in this region. With regard to the organization of the household and the analysis of familial structures, however, the inventory of the monuments allows very little to be said. In general, the archeologically investigated findings suggest larger units, which consistently exhibit prestigious functions. On the basis of the architectonic concept we may speak of a differentiated form of dwelling, suggesting a more complex organization of the household. A differentiation into public and private areas, however, is not possible because of the state of preservation of the material and the excavation methods which were used. The topographical location within the settlement area, however, implies that the residents of the individual houses belonged to the urban upper classes.

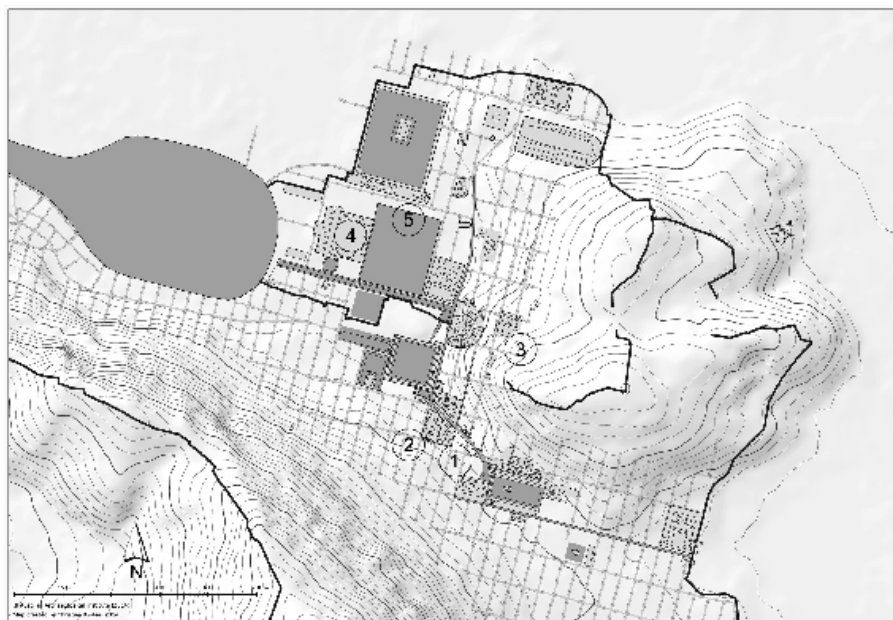


Figure 5.2 Domestic structures of Hellenistic, Roman and Late Antique date: (1) Terrace House 1; (2) Terrace House 2; (3) *domus* above the Great Theater;

(4) Late Antique houses in the Harbor Gymnasium; (5) Late Antique Residence south of the Church of Mary.

In summary it can be confirmed that in certain areas of the city, beneath the Late Antique/Byzantine and Imperial Roman structures, Hellenistic findings have indeed been encountered; their piecemeal character, however, prevents far-reaching, conclusive interpretations.

When the Roman Republic took power in Asia Minor, at Ephesus an increase in prosperity was felt in many areas of life. Not least because of its geostrategic position, Augustus elevated the harbor city to the position of capital of the province of Asia Minor and instigated an extensive building program which affected all areas of the city: thus, not only were public buildings remodeled or newly erected, but private residential complexes were dismantled and new domestic buildings were set up in their place.

Even in completely excavated and very well researched residential complexes such as the Terrace Houses, only extremely limited statements may be made regarding household and familial structure. We may cite as an example the already mentioned Terrace House 2 (Figure 5.2, no. 2), constructed in the late Augustan–Tiberian period, and destroyed in ca. 280 CE as the immediate consequence of a catastrophic earthquake, never to be rebuilt. The destruction horizon enables a snapshot into the material culture at the time of the soldier-emperors, even more so as, after previous destructions, the final phase of configuration can be dated to a relatively short time frame, from 230 to 260/80 CE. On the basis of these circumstances, the starting point could hardly be better: besides the architecture and decorative fixtures, many portable objects of furniture and household goods and numerous graffiti on the walls have been preserved, which enables an insight into the living environment of the inhabitants of the Terrace House.

What inferences can be drawn from the archeological evidence, and what limitations should be borne in mind absolutely? It might initially be surprising that, precisely because we are dealing here with houses of the elite, definitive statements are more difficult. The architecture and furnishings were chosen for purposes of prestige and did not conform to familial requirements. For example, within the 950 m² area of residential unit 6, an inner-urban palace of the second–third century CE, not a single direct piece of evidence has been found for household activities; all of the preserved rooms were reserved for prestigious display and the reception of guests. As an additional example, in the preserved inventory of residential unit 4, a division between prestigious areas and spaces for household use indicates a ratio of 83 percent to 13 percent. The remaining 4 percent is allotted to entrance areas (Thür 2005a: 422).

Consequently, no conclusions regarding family size can be drawn from the room dimensions of the house. Complicating the picture is the fact that elite

families had rural properties in their possession, in addition to their urban domiciles. A number of such luxurious villa complexes are also known from the immediate surroundings of Ephesus (Miltner 1956–1958; Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut 2012: 45–6); these, in addition to the *pars urbana*, provide evidence of a *pars rustica* set up for agricultural production and handicrafts. Therefore, the interconnection between the domestic and working world well enough known from antiquity is manifested in the civic environment as well as the rural one. If the urban residences were used for the undertaking of business activities, and were therefore open not only to the family but also to clients, guests, and unannounced visitors, then in the case of the rural properties we can assume a not inconsiderable number of people were employed in agriculture and handicrafts.

In the case of Terrace House 2, researchers are in the fortunate position of knowing the names of at least two of the house owners, and in both instances they are well-known Ephesian citizens. Thus, residential unit 2 belonged to the knight Vibius Salutaris (Taeuber 2005a), while the already mentioned residential unit 6 was the property of the family of Caius Flavius Furius Aptus (Thür 2008). The inscriptions naming the owners were found in a number of places in the house: on a statue of Dionysos adorning the great peristyle courtyard, in an epigram embedded in front of the apsidal room, on the reverse of a marble plaque probably to be interpreted as a delivery address, and on a simple ceramic jug. Whereas the first two mentioned were probably ordered by the owner and served to represent him, the delivery address, which by the way was written in Latin, is an important piece of evidence for the organization of trade and handicrafts. The marble, used for a costly wall revetment, was quarried at Dokimeion and transported in blocks to Ephesus, where the production of the plaques, their finishing, and their installation were carried out. Of greatest interest for our study, however, is the unremarkable jug with its engraving. For this engraving documents an individual who, sitting in the house of Aptus during the second century CE, decided for whatever reason to write: “I belong to somebody else and not to Aptus” (Waldner and Ladstätter 2014: 458 (K984)). The obvious dominance of the home owner was probably not welcomed by everybody living in the household. Meanwhile the quasi-official inscriptions document a tradition of home ownership spanning a number of generations. Otherwise it would be unthinkable that the name of Flavius Furius Aptus, whose career can be dated to the mid-second century CE, was not erased or that the inscriptions were not removed, but instead more than a hundred years later were still prominently visible in their original location (Rathmayr 2009).

In residential unit 2 three small ivory heads are preserved, which are interpreted as family portraits of the Severan period. Naturally also in this case there is no evidence that they represent members of the owner’s family other than the fact that the portraits have contemporary facial characteristics

and were found as an ensemble in one room (Dawid 2003: 69–70, 73–5). Other child or youthful portraits allow the possibility that here also images of family members were represented and the busts were set up in the house (Christof 2010: 664). In addition to this staged presentation of progeny, birth announcements can be pointed to – for example a Prokope (Taeuber 2005b: 133 (GR 60)) – which were engraved into the walls. The alphabet exercises (Taeuber 2010: 122, 427–89) which can be seen incised into the wall plaster at a low level are probably also to be ascribed to children living in the household.

There is even less material evidence of women, if the private portraits are ignored. Indeed, female names appear again and again in the graffiti, and it is likely that they were female proprietors, but nonetheless their position within the household is not explicitly mentioned. This applies also to degrees of relationship, such as the naming of an aunt on the father's side in a graffito in residential unit 2 (Taeuber 2010: 474 (GR 159)). The oath “a curse on the adulteress” from residential unit 6 at least permits one interpretation (Taeuber 2014: 331 (GR 238)).

A rare piece of archeological evidence for the social status of a female house owner is a splendid distaff, found in residential unit 2. Pieces of decorative equipment such as this, also termed distaffs of Venus, were wedding gifts for a Roman bride and are frequently found as grave goods, although rarely in a domestic context. They were carefully preserved by the female house owners, the *matronae*, before accompanying them in their graves as symbols of their authority and motherhood (Trinkl 2004: 281–303).

If we regard the plan of the insula designated as Terrace House 2, then a few interesting facts emerge. Among these is the small number of rooms which can be identified with certainty because of their specific installations as kitchens. Only in two houses is it possible to discern without doubt kitchens with built-in ovens, and in both cases these are fittings dating to the third century CE (Thür 2005b: 422; Rathmayr 2010: 439). Otherwise the utilitarian areas are centrally located and could be used by a number of houses at the same time. On the basis of these architectonic finds, it can be concluded that more than one family shared one tract for utilitarian purposes. In this space were located not only areas for the storage and preparation of food and drink, but also storage and utility rooms as well as the *praeurnia* of connected bathing establishments. Mention must also be made here of the numerous receipts for purchases which were incised into the wall plaster and which refer to prepared foods which had been delivered. Cooking within the family context, at least for the elites in Ephesus, must have played only a subsidiary role; more frequently, cookshops were visited and ready-prepared food was brought home.

Circumstances in stark contrast to this outline of the domestic relationships of the upper classes are found in the immediate vicinity. *Tabernae* were situated

in front of the residential complex to the north and to the south which functioned as retail shops, workshops, and housing. Mostly these were elongated structures divided into two rooms. While retail activity took place in the front area, space for production of goods was located in the rear. An upper section, normally accessed by a wooden ladder, served as a storage space or also as space for sleeping. The blurring of boundaries between living space and working space, already mentioned with regard to the urban residents, is nowhere more apparent than in the small, dark *tabernae*, where families had to combine the imperatives of commercial activity with “private” requirements. The overwhelming majority of the urban residents of Ephesus will have experienced such living and working conditions; this is indicated not least by the great density of *tabernae* distributed across the entire city region.

The extensive destructions of the late third century represent a decisive event in the history of the city’s development. Only in the course of the fourth century can activity be comprehended – at first haltingly, and then later in increasing measure. Towards the end of the fourth century, building activity points to a regular program coordinated by a higher authority, in the course of which the city acquired a significantly altered character. Thus in the area of the lower city the new city center grew up with a concentration of public secular and sacred buildings, as well as private houses. In the chambers of the imperial period Harbor Gymnasium (Figure 5.2, no. 4), and above the destroyed colonnades of the Xystoi (Halls of Verulanus) (Figure 5.2, no. 5) belonging to the Harbor Baths, prestigious residences arose, very similar in size and importance to the Terrace Houses of the imperial era.³ Here again we are dealing with peristyle houses, the central element of which is a courtyard surrounded by columns and around which rooms of various functions are grouped. Since the houses in the Harbor Gymnasium were already excavated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, only the existing building stock is available today for analysis; a complex in the north of the Harbor Gymnasium lends itself for consideration from the perspective of familial constructions. According to the concept of its ground plan, House 1 can be roughly divided into two areas. Via a corridor one arrives at an initial courtyard, through which a series of rooms is accessed on one side; due to their size and location within the organization of the house, they are most likely to be related to the functions of public life. These rooms are similar to halls, are partially fitted with *opus sectile* flooring, and are accessed via a large portal. From this first courtyard, however, one continues on to the rear part of the complex, which is clearly offset by means of two closable, and from the inside lockable, doors. Again a large peristyle court forms the central element of this area, from which a room, once ornamented with mosaics, could be accessed; this is currently interpreted as a dining room. In addition, another room can be reached from the courtyard: this room, once decorated with an *opus sectile* floor, is understood to be a small audience hall or

reception room due to its fixtures which are still *in situ*. Owing to its closed-off character, on the one hand, and the individual room elements, on the other, it is quite apparent that the home owner set up a clear boundary here for the “public” area of the house. It is probable that this secluded part of the house was reserved for the family, yet close friends and clients of the house also likely had access to it; barriers in the form of doors may indicate this.

Much more conclusive for our purposes, however, is a similar complex, located in the immediate vicinity, which has been worked since 2011 and archeologically investigated (Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut 2011: 23–5, 2012: 23–7, 2013: 21–4). Although only half of this ca. 1,200 m² building has been excavated, nevertheless, owing to the unique situation of the findings, a number of inferences may be drawn – though with reservations – which are applicable to our theme. In a similar fashion to Terrace House 2, this “Late Antique Residence south of the Church of Mary” was abruptly destroyed by fire in the second half of the seventh century; the cause of the fire was probably seismic activity. This circumstance has meant elements of furnishings and household inventory, in part deriving from the upper story, are preserved. If one only analyses the plan of the building, then here one passes through a room into a courtyard, which was similarly set up as a peristyle court. To this courtyard is appended, in the rear, southwest corner of the house, a row of representative rooms which were richly decorated with mosaics and *opus sectile* flooring. These spaces appear to have served as banquet rooms, but one might also recognize here the host’s reception rooms, within which he conducted his daily business. In the part facing the street lies a row of rooms connected to agricultural activity: in one room were found remains of a press, storage jars, and ovens, which were used in the processing and production of foodstuffs. The ability to access inner areas of the house from here, however, indicates that this area formed an integral element of the building. Next to it an additional room was brought to light; the coin finds suggest that commercial activity in the form of trade and industry occurred here.

Although a functional allocation of rooms for domestic and private activities alone is occasionally very difficult on the basis of the building finds, it can nevertheless be assumed that the rooms excavated so far had a representative function or were used for commercial activity. Yet nonetheless the find materials shed light on the daily life of the inhabitants. Thus, for example, the discovery of several bone needles indicates the presence of female members of the household. To this can be added finds of small bottles which in antiquity generally served for storing cosmetics; a number of elements of costume convey an insight into the clothing and personal adornment of the female members of the household.

Part of a marble wellhead provides impressive testimony for the inhabitants of the house: the inscription on it begins with a quotation from the Psalms and

ends with the saying “Lord protect the inhabitants of this house and him who wrote this. Amen.” (Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut 2013: 40).

Additional finds from the entire urban area similarly provide evidence for the destruction during the seventh century, yet a continuity with regard to settlement activity – if only in reduced form – can be observed. Until now, no buildings have been found which can be definitively identified as residential homes.

On the basis of the archeological evidence it is clear that in the early Middle Ages a new settlement concentration was formed again in the area of the Artemision. Here around the Ayasoluk, which was built up as a fortification, in succession a flourishing Seljuk city grew up; of this city only a few public buildings, for example baths, a mosque, and Islamic tomb monuments, have been investigated. Currently no domestic finds have yet been made, and therefore from an archaeological standpoint there is no source material which might provide information regarding the manner in which people coexisted in a familial form at that time.

In summary it can be observed that, from the architectural evidence alone, only a few very general conclusions are possible regarding household organization and family structure at Ephesus. Once more it is evident that only a contextual analysis of all finds available to us, and their relevant features, can convey a clear picture of the form of human coexistence under one roof. And even this should be done with all due caution.

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Notes

¹ For a discussion of the terminology, see e.g. Nevett 2011: 16.

² On the ongoing work, see Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut 2011: 17–21, 2012: 11–14, 2013: 11–12.

³ Summarized and with the ground plans in Schwaiger 2012.

Part III

The Roman World

Traces of the Unfamiliar: *Epigraphic Evidence for Extended Families on the Margins in Roman Italy*

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Introduction

In a seminal article from the 1970s, Hammel and Laslett provided a catalogue of problematic issues relating to comparative studies of household structure over time: what kind of evidence is privileged (composition of domestic groups or kinship relations); who examines the evidence (social historians or anthropologists); what language(s) encode the vocabulary pertaining to familial structures and attitudes and how this information should be decoded; and the significance of cultural diversity in establishing structural definitions for differing types of family across historical time.¹ This foreshadowed Laslett's important contribution to historical household studies in the early 1980s, the five-fold typology of family units which remains influential into the twenty-first century.² While this approach to understanding modern family systems continues to inform demographic and anthropological scholarship, testing its spatiotemporal principles – within the statistical limitations imposed by the evidentiary record – offers intriguing insights with respect to the diversity of relational configurations in the ancient Mediterranean.

The family has been recognized in Roman Italy as the key social institution on which both society and the state were based.³ However, while in many ways integral to the formulation and articulation of identity, status, attitudes and values, in the pre-Classical, Classical and post-Classical Roman world, the family was constructed in dissimilar ways.

From the conclave of male slaves, vagabonds and runaways and abducted marriageable women that constituted the Romulean city and its citizen community (Livy 1.8.5–1.9.14) to the co-dependent relationships entered into within and across slave households and as part of ex-slave and mixed family units across the later Republic and Empire, the characterization of the Roman family as a citizen father (an adult male Roman, the *paterfamilias*) and mother (his wife, the *materfamilias*, or successive wives) with full partnership in the fortunes of the household and raising of children (together with the children of

sons, and their sons, and so on) has rested on a problematic and complex foundation.⁴ In other words, although sharing many cultural features – as the exemplary narratives of early Rome and the later historical record reveal – manifestations of family in the Roman world in fact differed greatly.

While lacking the substantive demographic foundation of family studies in the modern era, scholarship of the fragmentary evidence relating to the Roman family has identified groups of people related by blood, marriage, law or custom: in short, the nuclear family (a father, a mother, and their sons and daughters) or the extended family (kinship or tribal groups).⁵ Within the ambit of the latter category, careful study of the surviving epigraphic corpora of Roman Italy reveals certain groups of people who lived together, groups that are similar to that extended group related by blood, marriage, law, or custom, but which have not often been directly acknowledged in the literature of ancient family studies.⁶ This under-examined category of extended family may be situated in relation to the etymological root of the Latin term *familia*, namely *famulus/a* (male/female slave); in other words, servile and freed groups living and working together within marked boundaries of industry, duty, companionship and affection. Inscriptions in civic, residential and occupational spaces identify the groups which display these relationships: firefighters in Ostia and the Roman capital; apprentices to service in the Palatine palace; and, of course, the servile *familia* within the households of republican and imperial Rome. This chapter will adduce a range of formal and informal epigraphic testimony in relation to the first two “familial” communities – with comparative reference to the latter – as an entry-point to explore the extent to which various social groups in ancient Rome understood themselves in relation to the traditional markers of the extended family – legal formulations; kinship structures; marriage, divorce and children; and affective relations.

The *Vigiles* of Ostia and the *Transtiberim*

This study of epigraphic traces in the urban fabric of Roman Italy relating to *different* articulations of the extended *familia* begins with a context that affords the observer a glimpse of the unexpected nature of Roman society and the complexity of cultural relations within a male-prominent social environment. Consider this dedication, inscribed on a stone altar of imperial date found in the port city of Ostia (*CIL* 14.4281):

	C(aius) VALERIVS
MYRON . B(ene)F(iciarius)	
PR(aefecti sc. <i>vigilum</i>).	
COH(ortis) IIII VIG(ilum).	
FORTVNAE	

5	SANCTAE
	V(otum) S(oluit) L(ibens) A(nimo) ⁷
	Ostia II.V.1–2 Caserma dei Vigili; first century CE.
3. COH(<i>ortis</i>) or COH(<i>orte</i>)	

Gaius Valerius Myron, *beneficiarius* of the prefect of the firefighters (*uigiles*), belonging to the fourth cohort of the *uigiles*, made an offering, freely in spirit, to Fortuna Sancta.

This altar was found in front of a shrine which may be called a hanging aedicula, namely an aedicula without a base. The excavators reconstructed it from marble fragments that had fallen on the floor. From bottom to top the aedicula consists of three consoles (starting at a height 1.60 m from the floor), a bottom slab, two tiny columns, a top slab, and a tympanum (the total height is 1.14 m). FORTUNA SANCT(ae) is inscribed on the tympanum of the aedicula.

At first glance, finding this altar rings few esoteric bells.⁸ The official Roman military religious calendar, as exemplified by the *Feriale Duranum*, embodied traditional Roman religion.⁹ Private dedications by soldiers, however, involved a much wider range of divinities: Roman gods, native gods of non-Roman auxiliaries, and gods indigenous to the local region of the Roman empire in which soldiers were stationed.¹⁰ An altar dedicated to Fortuna Sancta by a member of the cohort of *uigiles* stationed in Ostia during the first centuries of the Common Era conforms to this pattern. Moreover, while archaeological, literary and epigraphic examination in the three most comprehensive studies of Fortuna to date suggest that all of the distinctive, individual traits of the Roman goddess belonged to a collective identity,¹¹ recent studies about Fortuna in religious settings show that “Fortuna cults were devoted to a variety of specific groups ... individuals, occasions ... and cities.”¹² Throughout the history of Rome, therefore, altars like the one set up by C. Valerius Myron could be either independent dedications or associated with temples.¹³ However, providing a context for such a discovery – namely, the communal lavatory (*forica*) of the barracks – allows the modern viewer to view a potential site of cultural difference and an entry-point into the familial relations of persons who lived, worked, and sometimes died in Ostia in service to the state.

Three literary references place representations of Fortuna and cult activity associated with the goddess in the vicinity of baths and public latrines.¹⁴ Surveys of religious practices in the Roman army, particularly in Britain, confirm dedications to Fortuna, described in a few instances as Fortuna Balnearis, in military bath-houses.¹⁵ In fact, the possibility of encountering a

likeness of Fortuna in some kind of composite ritual and sanitary context is neither confined to these citations nor archaeologically to the site under consideration.¹⁶

These alignments of dedication and sanitation in ancient literary and material sources corroborate a particular world of thought associated with the material evidence and social context of the Ostian latrine: a dedicatory stone column (*cippus*), a votive plaque (*titulus*), a simple altar (*ara*), and a recessed shrine (*aedicula*), all dedicated to the goddess Fortuna Sancta, situated within the confines of a communal space designed for the evacuation of bodily waste. No other culture gives a deity a place like this in a toilet room. Indeed, in most cultures it would be considered a blasphemous act. By asking what we “do” with this evidence, we can use the archaeological and literary sources to identify a vocabulary that is both architectural and cultural, one which acknowledges ancient attitudes, is sensitive to the difference inherent in a specifically Roman urban context, and, apropos the focus of this chapter, clarifies the relationship between the group of persons for whom this space was special and the category of extended family.¹⁷

Location should tell us something. The *forica* is part of the barracks set aside for the firefighters of Ostia, associated with the corps of freedmen (*liberti*) originally created under Augustus to deal with fire, crime, incendiarism and, in emergencies, military duties.¹⁸ This identification places Fortuna Sancta as the focus of some kind of cult practice within a suburban quasi-military outpost (*uexillatio*). There is nothing extraordinary about that, except the placement of *cippus* and *titulus*, *ara* and *aedicula* in relation to physical and spatial functions.¹⁹

What, then, do we know about the Ostian cohort of firefighters? First, it was the only extra-urban duty of the *uigiles*; and, in view of the close ties between port and city, even that may be classed as urban. Living so closely, therefore, both to the seat of administrative power under which their community was established and through which their service was directed as well as to the hearths of patronage and kinship from which their persons were nurtured and selected, the *uigiles* – residing and working under a single roof – conform in broad strokes to that element of geographic proximity by which we define the spatial parameters of the extended family.

Second, the sixth Praetorian cohort was originally quartered at Ostia under Augustus. Part of its duties was to give help in cases of fire, as we are told by the gravestone of one of its men who was given a public funeral by the colony after losing his life in a firefighting accident (*CIL* 14.4494.2–7).²⁰

	MILITI COHOR(tis) VI PR(aetoriae)
OSTIENSES LOCVM SEPULT(urae)	
DEDERVNT/PVBLICOQ(ue)	
FVNERE EFFERVN(dum)/	

DECREVERVNT QVOD IN INCENDIO	
5	RESTINGVENDO INTERIT
	Ostia, Tomba del Pretoriano B4; early first century CE

The people of Ostia provided the place of burial for a soldier of the sixth Praetorian Cohort and decreed that he must be given a public funeral because he died while extinguishing in a fire.

Tiberius in 23 CE moved the cohort to Rome, and it seems no other troops were sent to take their place until Claudius,²¹ namely the seventeenth urban cohort.²² Vespasian reduced the numbers of city troops, and probably withdrew the urban cohort from Ostia. Only after Hadrian did the *uexillatio* of *uigiles* come regularly to Ostia.²³

In this regard, that Ostia lacked an official or, at least, an explicitly recorded garrison between ca. 79 and 138 CE does not exclude the practice of setting up a ritual assemblage to Fortuna Sancta in a space intended for the depositing of human waste. Given the presence of *uigiles* in the port city since the Augustan period and irregularly thereafter until some point in time prior to the Vespasianic evacuation, we may infer the existence of this practice in some form or other. By reference to this continuity of service, situated within a context of community respect for the duties performed across a significant chronological period, we may further associate the *uigiles* – at least in terms of a temporal sequence of contemporaneous individuals having common cultural or social characteristics and attitudes – with the generational nature of the extended family.

Third, we know that the post-Hadrianic *uexillatio* numbered 600 men from different cohorts, comprising, below the high status officials in charge (the *praepositus* and *subpraefectus*), such functionaries as

- *optio* (an officer assisting superior officers)
- *tesserarius* (a soldier who receives and distributes the watchword from the commander)
- *cornicularius* (in this case, the tribune's assistant)
- *bucinator* (a soldier who plays the horn, or *bucina*, used for military signals or assemblies)
- *secutor tribuni* (tribune's "follower"), and
- our *beneficiarius praefecti* (a soldier who, through the favour of his commander, was exempt from menial offices like throwing up entrenchments, procuring wood and water, foraging, or digging latrines; that is, a privileged soldier).²⁴

As should be clear, this catalogue of military personnel and administrators includes equestrian staff officers in command of the auxiliary cohort, officers second in command only to centurions and decurions, individuals with special duties or particular skills, and ordinary soldiers in the ranks. However, it is safe to suppose that – within the confines and around the neighborhood of the Ostian *uexillatio* – below the level of the commanding officers we are dealing with a wide range of people, including traders, artisans and slaves, as well as wives, partners in a quasi-marital relationship, girl-friends and professional female companions. This partial list must also accommodate interactions with the inhabitants and non-resident male and female population of the larger Ostian community. That there seem to have been drinking establishments on each side of the main entrance to the *uexillatio* reinforces this consideration.²⁵ Of course, the relative proximity of the Roman metropolis will have alleviated the usual pressures of separation associated with decentralized military service. Nevertheless, the active process of policing, organization and control of the conditions of Ostian life pertinent to the command must have required a nexus of professional, social and psychological links pervading all levels of the *uexillatio*. In terms of gender, status, occupation and residence, the range of sociocultural inter-relationships may best be understood as broad and diverse, and necessitates a “reading” of the available evidence over and against the obvious markers of a Roman military establishment. In relation to the factors already adduced, and with regard both to that element of the extended family identified as comprising kinship or tribal groups and to the interdependencies of civic, social and affective relations, the nature of the community of Ostian *uigiles* may be regarded as a special category of familial unit.

Fourth, a number of inscriptions incised in a cursive script (*CIL* 14.4512–30) reflect the popularity of writing on the wall; many were scratched on the walls to the left and right of the primary gate of the barracks proper.²⁶ They also describe the capacity for self-representation in a particular if only partially contextualized ancient community; a facility limited as much by circumstance and situation as by degree of expression or extent of vocabulary.²⁷ Many graffiti were found on the right wall of the *pronaos* and in the room to the south of the *Augusteum*. Some *uigiles* call themselves *bucinator*, that is, a trumpeter who gave signals that organized the daily life of the men. Another man is designated as an *exactus lanternarum*, overseer of the lamps and torches. Severus Alexander, emperor from 222–35 CE, is mentioned in one graffiti: “For the safety of our lord Severus Alexander, the pious, the happy, Augustus. We, the soldiers of the first cohort of the firefighters, the Severan, were stationed in these barracks for 30 days.” In a few other graffiti the words *tutus* (safe) and *feliciter* (in a happy way) suggest that firefighters thanked the emperor for the safe outcome of their work and that of some of their comrades.²⁸ The work involved not only fighting fires, as we have seen, but also nightly patrols and retrieving runaway slaves.

Given the nature of these graffiti – located in close proximity to the *Augusteum*, where the bases of statues to Antoninus Pius, Aelius Caesar, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, and Septimius Severus still stand, with others to Severus, Caracalla, Julia Domna, Gordian III, Tranquillina, and perhaps even Diadumenianus – it is difficult not to see in the textual residue a representation of the emperor as the divine head of a quasi-military household of *uigiles*. As provider and protector of this cohort of men dedicated to the service of *imperator*, *urbs* and *res publica*, the emperor is not only *pater patriae* but *paterfamilias*, father of the Ostian *cohors uigilum*.

In front of the imperial shrine is a well-preserved black and white mosaic with graphic sacrificial scenes. Interesting for its absence at Ostia is the cult of the *genius castrorum* – universal throughout the army, with dedications addressed to the *genius* of almost every military formation and habitation. At Ostia, then, ritual practice in the *uexillatio* of the *cohors uigilum* focused not on the military standard or *signum* – symbol of Roman imperial power — but on that of the emperor and *his* family, including, as we have seen, his *extended* family associated with the barracks. There is no surviving trace of a *genius* of any description, or for that matter of any cult other than the Imperial.²⁹

This testimony to status-inclusive participation in the epigraphic environment by the *familia* of Ostian *uigiles* may be compared with the inscriptions found in the guardhouse (*excubitorium*) of the seventh cohort serving the fourteenth Augustan region, on the western side of the river Tiber (the *Transtiberim*)³⁰ These constitute a dense series of graffiti on the plaster of a series of service rooms in the smaller garrison of the permanent detachment of the cohort, constructed at the end of the second century CE over a private house. This rich collection of epigraphic material³¹ records the names of the guards; their fears, their superstitions; and, above all, their labors, carried out with few and rudimentary aids.³²

At this point, and in tandem with the identification of these two communities of *uigiles* as a category of extended Roman *familia*, a clue to our original question – regarding the adoption, if not necessarily the location, of Fortuna – can be found in the Ostian inscription *CIL* 14.4530:³³

COH(orte) VI (<i>centuria</i>) OST(iensis) IMP(eratore)
AN(tonino) CO(n)S(ulibus) L(a)ETO ET CE X
RIALE SEBARIUS
CALPVRNIVS ³⁴
Ostia I.III.2, Sacello del Silvano; 215 CE
1. The epigraphic sign for <i>centuria</i> following VI could just possibly be read as I, giving VI I;

IMP(eratore) or IMP(erante) 2. AN(toninus) = M. Aurelius Severus Antoninus (Septimius Bassianus, or Caracalla); X = *uotis decennialibus* 3.

SEBARIVS = *sebacarius*.

Calpurnius, nightwatchman from the Ostian *centuria*, from the seventh *cohors*, during the reign of Antoninus [Caracalla], in the year of the consuls [Q. Maecius] Laetus and [Munatius Sulla] Cerialis (215 AD), X.

Inscriptions of the seventh cohort of *excubitores*³⁵ nearly all deal with the duty of the *sebac(i)arius*. The word may be derived from *sebaceus* or *sebum*, meaning tallow, and has something to do with tallow-candles or lamps. It is thus manifestly a duty performed at night. Scratched in Latin or Greek into the walls of the *impluvium* (to the left of the main entrance of the *excubitorium*) or of the spaces immediately beyond, inscribed either as free-standing texts or occasionally framed within *tabulae ansatae*, these graffiti follow a readily identifiable formula of expression and ordination. The following provides a useful illustration of the inscribing habit of the *cohors VII uigilum* (CIL 6.2998):

	IMP(eratori) SEVERO
	ALEXAND(ro) III
ET CASSIO DIONE ITERV(m)	
CO(n)S(ulo)	
COH(orte) VII VIGILVM	
SEVERIANE	
FELICIS FVRIVS VICTOR	
5	SEBACIARIA FECIT M(ensis)
	FEBR(uarius) I OMNIA TVTA
	VOTIS X
CO(n)GIARIV(m) X AVRIO	

Furius Victor, *sebacaria*, from the seventh *cohors* of *uigiles*, the Severan Felix, made (this) during the month of February (in the year) when Severus Alexander was consul for the third time and Cassius Dio was consul for the second time [CE 229]. Everything is safe. In the tenth year (of Severus Alexander's reign) [the traditional *uota decennialia*], (the emperor distributed) a *congiarium* of ten *aurei*.

The epigraphic formula is five-fold: a consular date; the name and century of the inscriber; the essential fact (in the context of the *excubitorium*: *sebacaria fecit*); the month; and a final comment (here, reference to the generous distribution by the incumbent emperor of monetary relief to the soldiers living and working out of this way-station of *uigiles*). This graffito (and the 96 other messages scratched on the walls of this place) encapsulates the dedication to duty of the individuals serving as firefighters and law-enforcers in early third-century imperial Rome. Interestingly, the modern reader may be tempted to categorize this as an ephemeral inscription: that is, an informal text-mark with a limited life-span; distinct, therefore, from the formal legal, commemorative, and dedicatory epigraphy inscribed within the context of the monumental

intra- and extra-mural urban fabric. But it is clear that Furius Victor and his fellow *uigiles* intended their messages on the walls of the *excubitorium* – declarations of loyalty, piety and collegiality – to last. Over the course of a generation (roughly 30 years), this community of soldiers inscribed on the walls of their work-station a strictly regimented, explicitly codified sequence of micro-“plaques” – very much akin to the inscribed notices attached to statue-bases and funerary memorials. Moving through this building, the resident or visitor would not fail to register the declarations of identity (expressed in relation to occupation and relationship to their fellow *uigiles*), desire (associated closely to the nature of their service), and dependency (linked inextricably to the emperor and the state). As in the case of their Ostian colleagues, Furius and the other members of the *cohors VII uigilum* articulate indelibly the nature of their community in the shared spaces of their working environment and living area.

One of the Transtiberim graffiti provides us with a remarkable declaration of this familial contiguity.³⁶ A certain Vettius Florentinus, self-identified as a *sebaciarius*, gives thanks to the *genius* of the *excubitorium*. This declaration of gratitude identifies in physical and conceptual terms the extent to which the essential fabric of the work-place shared by Florentinus and his companions mattered. As we have noted, the Ostian *uigiles* do not appear to have registered a *genius* of person or place in relation to their *uexillatio* – the emperor and his family retained primacy in this regard. Here in the Transtiberim, it is not only the emperor whose patronage is recognized with due thanksgiving: Florentinus’ graffito gives expression to the collective male spirit of the *cohors VII uigilum* – comprising, we must assume, the spiritual part of each individual, or at the very least, the personification of their natural appetites and desires. In a very real sense, the *genius excubitori* may be compared to the spirit of a *gens* existing in his lifetime in the head of a family.

Further to this, if we note the exclamations which accompany many of the Transtiberim inscriptions (OMNIA TVTA, FELICITER, SALVIS COMANIPVLIS, LASSVS SVM),³⁷ we might reasonably conjecture that a *sebac(i)arius* was someone who carried a tallow light – a “nightwatchman,” in other words – and that the exclamations denote the duty as of a special and arduous nature. All of which should point us back to the purpose of the *uigiles* as originally disposed: a fire brigade. According to Baillie Reynolds (1926: 31), the equipment used by the cohort comprised:

- *siphones* (double-acting force pumps standing in water reservoirs);
- *centones* (patchwork quilts, blankets, or mattresses employed to break the fall of those jumping from upper storeys or, soaked in water, used to smother flames and prevent their spreading);
- *formiones* (wickerwork mats for either of the aforementioned);
- *scalae* (ladders);

- *perticae* (poles used to prop up walls in danger of collapse, though if smaller used to beat out the flames);
- *amae* (fire buckets, made of rope treated with pitch);
- *scopae* (brooms made of twigs?);
- *acetum* (vinegar, contained in vessels thrown into the fire, or for soaking the *centones*); and
- tools for clearing away debris – *dolabrae* (mattocks), *securae* (axes), the *falx* and *uncus/uncinus* (hooked and barbed sickles).

As part of this equation, the uniform of the *uigiles* may have included the military tunic, short sword on the right; and some may have carried the *fustis* – club, staff, or truncheon – and *flagellum*, or whip, for meting out punishment. If we integrate this data with the material already inferred or confirmed, the *cohortes uigilum* at Ostia and the Transtiberim should be regarded as composite, multi-status quasi-military units with specialist training, domiciled in specific places, closely associated by affinity of occupation and social condition, acting in the interests of an established and developing multi-status community on the margins of megalopolitan Rome, and subject to the control of one man (the emperor). To this extent, their usefulness in general terms as a measure of sociocultural activity in a suburban context, and, more specifically, their identification as a constituent element of the category of extended family, should be clear.

If we follow the implication in Paulus (*Dig.* 1.15.3.6),³⁸ and factor into the conjecture the Greek equivalent for *uigil* (*nuktophulax*), then much of the police work of the *uigiles* was performed at night. Coupled with the known dangers of firefighting in any age – recall our *uigil* who perished “while extinguishing a blaze” – then, to reacquaint ourselves with Fortuna Sancta and her latrine shrine, “placing one’s faith” or “investing” in the ambit of at worst neutral or most advantageously fortunate circumstance would seem logical. The previously cited absence of the usual cultic associations of *signa* and *genius* emphasizes the significance of Fortuna Sancta in the quotidian domain of men with a considerable investment in the preservation of life and limb. This interpretation extends Fröhlich’s suggestion that pictures of the goddess in Pompeian latrines act as protection against the “evil eye.” In the instance of the Ostian dedication, Fortuna Sancta acts similarly to ward the fourth cohort of the *vigiles* against bad luck in the performance of their duties. According to this view, the location of the dedication makes perfect sense. We have found Fortuna in bath-houses where men and women were reduced to the condition of nakedness. In both a physical and intellectual sense, such nakedness rendered them vulnerable to personal threat and abuse. Similarly, the latrine was a potent site of exposure and openness to harm from external forces beyond individual control. In such contexts, the image of Fortuna, and dedications to her particular power, would act as an appropriate safeguard

against the vicissitudes of intemperate chance and a reassuring presence in the midst of collective vulnerability.⁷

In this light, consider the associations made by L. Valerius Frontinus in setting up an altar to Fortuna Domestica Sancta, preserved on a stone base found in the excavations of Torlonia in Portus, associated with the barracks of the Claudian harbour town's own firefighters (*CIL* 14.6):

	FORTVNAE
DOMESTICAE . SAN	
CTAE . ARA . PRO SALVTE	
ET REDITV . L . SEPTIMI	
5	SEVERI PERTINACIS
	AVC .(?et d . clodi) SEPTI
(?mi albinus caesaris)	
L VALERIVS . FRONTINVS	
(centurio) . COH(ortis) . II .	
VIGIL(um) . SVA PECVNIA	
10	POSVIT CVM SVIS
	A(?nimo) L(?ibens) ET V(?otum) F(? ecit) I(?)
FL IVLIANVS CEN	
COR . IIII . VIGILI ⁴⁰	

Torlonia, Portus; late second century CE.

4-7. L. Septimius Severus gave the title of Caesar to Decimus Clodius Septimius Albinus, governor of Britain at the time of Commodus' murder, in spring 193. Albinus' position became untenable after Severus made his own son Caesar in 195, after defeating C. Pescennius Niger and the first Parthian war. Subscription: ...]rius Leo et Varius Fuficianus, who, together with Valerius Frontinus, are also commemorated in *CIL* 14.13, 14.

12-13. Added after by another hand.

Altar for Fortuna Domestica Sancta. Lucius Valerius Frontinus, centurion of the second cohort of the *uigiles*, set it up, together with his (?) family/people, freely in spirit, and he made a vow for the safety and return of Lucius Septimius Severus, Augustus, and Decimus Clodius Septimius Albinus, Caesar. Flavius Julianus, centurion of the fourth cohort of the *uigiles*.

As we have seen, L. Valerius Myron, *sebaciarius*, dedicated an altar to Fortuna Sancta, on behalf of the fourth cohort of *uigiles* at Ostia, so that the goddess would protect his colleagues, vulnerable to the many dangers of their profession, and restore them to the safety of the barracks. In the same way, L. Valerius Frontinus, centurion, dedicated an altar to Fortuna Domestica Sancta,

on behalf of the second cohort of *uigiles* at Portus, so that the goddess would protect the recently proclaimed emperor Pertinax and his chosen Caesar Clodius Albinus, exposed to the challenges of a new rule in dangerous times, and to return them to Rome, respectively, from confrontation in Syria (Severus) and governorship in Britain (Albinus). In both instances, the dedicators look to Fortuna to protect individuals who face physical hardship, personal danger, and tests of courage and endurance – and who belong to an extended *familia* closely associated by affinities of service, status, and practice and grounded in service to city, state, and emperor.⁴¹

The Palace Slaves of Imperial Rome⁴²

Descending the south-western slope of the Palatine hill from the presumed *bibliotheca Apollonis* situated south of the Flavian palace, in the area to the west of the large hemicycle of the *domus Caesaris*, are the remains of a building consisting of several rooms and a hemicycle around a central area. This edifice is generally recognized by the name of “paedagogium” because of the phrase “*exit de paedagogio*” (or formulations thereof), often accompanied by a single name, which occurs 12 times in graffiti on the structure’s walls.⁴³ In line with the primary articulation of the *domus Caesaris*, the Palatine Paedagogium is orientated northwest–southeast and is therefore more or less parallel to the Circus Maximus. The main floor of the northern section of the edifice, better preserved, comprises ten rooms of different size, arranged to the sides of a large semicircular chamber. These rooms open out onto a *porticus* and paved rectangular courtyard. Although the form and appearance of the remainder of the structure are less certain, from the available planimetric data it seems possible to interpret what survives as a *quadriporticus* with a large open area to the south, including a long complex of unknown function and structure. Technical data indicates that the structure, which developed on at least two levels (as indicated by the presence of a staircase near the northwest corner), was constructed originally with brickwork datable to the Domitianic period.⁴⁴

There is still some uncertainty about the function of this building. Another building, a *paedagogium ad Caput Africae* on the Caelian hill, has also been identified as the possible site for the imperial training school on the basis of inscriptions, and the distinctions between the two have given rise to several interpretations.⁴⁵ Questions remain about whether or not this building should be identified as a *paedagogium*, and if and in what way it and the building on the Caelium may have been related. All views, though, require the structure to be occupied by a significant proportion of enslaved and manumitted persons. On this view, a study of graffiti inscribed into the material fabric of a building occupied by a specific servile population can help to re-populate the otherwise

empty volumes of architectural space. If, as Bourdieu⁴⁶ tells us, a building instils a certain “way of being” or “habitus” into those who use it, then it should be possible for the historian, by moving through a building inscribed with the material manifestations of a particular servile culture, to reconstruct something of that culture. Consequently, analyzing graffiti in the Palatine Paedagogium can tell us something about the formation of social identities and cultural patterns particular to slaves under imperial Roman rule. When contextualized in relation to references in the ancient literary and formal epigraphic sources to the imperial buildings and aristocratic facilities known as *paedagogia* and to slaves raised and educated in these elite Roman establishments, the epigraphic testimony of this group of persons – living together as a community of individuals within a specific socio-spatial context – opens up for further consideration the traditional definitions of complex family households and the extended family in ancient Roman society.⁴⁷

The term *paedagogium* was used not only as a toponym but also as a concrete descriptive term in an early imperial literary reference and a number of inscribed sources. Retailing a dream about the phenomenon of *phantasmata*, Pliny the Younger observed that, prior to the appearance of two white-tunicked apparitions at the window of an aristocratic *uilla urbana* (perhaps his own Laurentine retreat), a young male slave was sleeping in the company of others *in paedagogio*.⁴⁸ Given that Pliny provided a *gymnasium* for “his own” in his villa at Laurentinum and that he was spared the shouts and festive clamor of his slaves even during the Saturnalia,⁴⁹ we can suggest that the *paedagogium* of which he speaks comprised a number of slave children (*puer ... mixtus pluribus*) who occupied the space defined by the term for an unspecified purpose, though one that might be inferred to incorporate a sense of belonging or community of some kind from its lexical associations; perhaps of organized activity, enterprise, or instruction from comparison with use of the term in epigraphic citations.

As already noted, the term *paedagogium* was used by inhabitants of the Palatine building designated as such, specifically in the sense of a place to which an individual belonged and from which that individual eventually moved on (*exi(i)t de p(a)edagogio*). While it is difficult to pin down the significance of the formula *exi(i)t de p(a)edagogio*, this sequence of inferences suggests a tentative relationship between the successful completion of training in a particular category of service and movement of the trained slave from the training institution into the imperial *familia*. *Exi(i)t de p(a)edagogio* may have signified a slave’s declaration of promotion from apprentice *paedagogianus* to a titled position within the imperial servile community.⁵⁰ Additionally, commemorative inscriptions explicitly associated with the building on the Caelium refer to imperial slaves or freedmen who acted as *paedagogi* to younger male slaves. For instance, five individual epitaphs identify either *paedagogi a Kapite Africaes* or *paedagogi puerorum*

Kap. Afr., and a dedication of the second century to the emperor Caracalla lists 24 *paedagogi puerorum* by name. It is important to note that the latter title was used in private elite *familiae* as well as the imperial household.⁵¹ If we understand the Palatine Paedagogium as a residential institution for the vocational training of pre-pubescent and adolescent male slaves, drawing on a variety of “feeder” *familiae* as providers of an occupation-specific apprentice population intended for elite and imperial service, then the structural limits of such a community may be seen, in the same light as the Ostian and Transtiberim *cohortes uigilum*, as further reason to reconsider traditional limits of the *familia* in antiquity.

The evidence embraces a range of conduct and duty for the nominal staff of *paedagogia*.⁵² With respect to the imperial institution, for the individuals called *paedagogi puerorum*, Mohler suggested that the title refers to the duty of child-attendant or tutor rather than teacher.⁵³ On the other hand, at the heart of the study which inspired his interest in the nature of the Roman family, Bradley argued that *paedagogi* of imperial and aristocratic boys and girls acted in a variety of interrelated capacities: instilling *disciplina* (dispensing academic and moral instruction); exercising *custodia* (acting in the role of companion and protector); and maintaining *decorum* (transmitting directives or precepts for public behavior).⁵⁴ In this view, the title given to the director of a *paedagogium* in three commemorative inscriptions (*praeceptor*) is suggestive both in relation to the hierarchies of status, condition, and authority within such a community and with respect to the structural definition of the extended family.⁵⁵

References to the servile objects of this organized duty of care and education – the *paedagogiani* (defined by association with place) or *pueri* (classified as the recipients of tutelary action) – can be located across a spectrum of literary genres (history, philosophy, biography, satire, and legal rescript). The third-century CE Latin jurist Paulus (*Dig.* 50.16.204) defined the term *puer* in three ways: a slave; a male; a boy. This Roman caste of servile male children is depicted in a variety of ways by the remaining sources: accompanying their *domini* on walks, journeys, and hunts; serving at table and in the bath-house; performing sexual services for their imperial and aristocratic owners.⁵⁶ On the west wall of Room 6 of the Paedagogium, the individuals Epitynchanus and Asiaticus appear to designate themselves as *pueri*; this collective term is also inscribed on the southeast wall of the same room, though in that instance without attached names.⁵⁷ In a number of literary citations, the appearance of the *paedagogiani* or *pueri* is distinctive. They are sumptuously dressed and display hairstyles of uniform nature; these coiffures are very much like that of women.⁵⁸ In addition to the elegance of their dress, hair, and deportment, this class of young male slave combines physical beauty with skill and accomplishment at their tasks.⁵⁹

In this regard, a prevalent abbreviation among the graffiti – V () D () N () –

can be interpreted as an explicit identification of collegial identity among a sub-group within the Palatine community.⁶⁰ Taking account of the fact that a proportion of the servile population on the Palatine would have been a product of sexual relationships within the environment of imperial or elite *familiae*, a number of *paedagogium* slave-boys will have been designated as *ex ancillanatus*, that is, *uernae* or house-born slaves. The individuals Demetrius and Dolphius, for instance, identified themselves as *uernae*, and an otherwise unknown person registered his occupational and social status as *uerna exit de paedagogio*.⁶¹ The formula V () D () N () can therefore be read as *u(erna) d(omini) n(ostri)*; for example, *Primus V () D () N ()* defines Primus as “a house-born slave of our Lord,” namely, Imperator Caesar.⁶²

The historical range of the literary and epigraphic references to *paedagogia*, *paedagogi*, and *paedagogiani* encompasses in relative terms the archaeological chronology of the Palatine Paedagogium – from the early Empire to the Severan period – and continues for at least another two centuries beyond. Apart from the noted citations in the corpus of inscriptions found at Rome, the first implicit reference to a servile population associated with the cultivating syllabus of the *paedagogium* dates to the late Republic. It can be found in Cicero’s oration on behalf of Sextus Roscius, where he mentions the “little slave boys” of Sulla’s potent freedman, L. Cornelius Chrysogonus. These *pueruli* were “masters of every art and every refinement, youths picked out of the most bequested households.”⁶³ The latest surviving item emerges in the early sixth century CE. The seventh section in the thirty-third book of Justinian’s *Digest* of Roman law relating to the legacy of *instructum* or *instrumentum*, considers the question of which individuals associated with the preparation and serving of food and wine should be included under this rubric. In this regard, Ulpian pronounces on the incorporation of trainee slave-boys into the legated *fundus instructum*, thereby outlining the appropriate exercise of care over *paedagogiani* who serve in the *triclinii* of authorized *domini*.⁶⁴

The Hellenized Jewish philosopher Philo, familiar with the extravagance of the imperial *domus* from his months at Rome as the leader of a diplomatic embassy to Gaius, provides one of the most useful descriptions of the appearance of Roman slave-boys in convivial contexts. In *De uita contemplatiua* 50–2, Philo comments on the beauty of the boys carrying water and pouring wine. Their faces are painted with cosmetics, their long hair is skillfully trimmed or plaited, and their tunics are of the finest fabrics and elegantly arranged. In addition to the sources cited above which support Philo’s observations, we can note that slave-boys serving at table are especially valued for their long, beautiful hair; they are referred to as *capillati*, *comati*, *criniti*, *crispuli*, and *calamistrati*.⁶⁵

A number of iconographic documents can be added to this textual record. A painting in the *triclinium* of the Pompeian House of the Chaste Lovers

(IX.12.6) depicts a boy serving wine, bringing garlands, and pouring wine into a bowl. Another Pompeian *domus*, the House of the Triclinium (V.2.4), contains a banquet scene in which slave-boys take off the shoes of one guest and support another vomiting drunkenly. Importantly, at Rome, in the S side room of the Schola Praeconum, which we have identified as an adjunct of the Palatine Paedagogium, is a painting of a row of male servants greeting guests. Also at Rome, in a building on the Caelium which may be part of the imperial infrastructure or an aristocratic *domus*, there is a processional scene comprising seven young male slaves – one wine-server, and six plate-bearers with a variety of foods. The wine-server and two other slaves are shown with long, flowing hair; the remainder have shorter hair. The wine-server is very well dressed in a tunic with *clavi* and *orbiculi* in red and gold; the others are wearing long-sleeved tunics with ornamental shoulder patches.

Taking the literary and formal epigraphic evidence into account, the ephemeral inscriptions covering the walls of the Palatine Paedagogium were scratched in all probability by slaves and freedmen living there. The writing was inscribed for the most part with a *stylus*, or instruments sharp and stable enough to achieve a similar end, or in some instances with ink, chalk, charcoal, or paint.⁶⁶ All the surviving items conform to the ancient Roman cursive style of writing.

At first sight, the graffiti represent a very heterogeneous orthography. Of course, with respect to the execution of cursive inscriptions, a number of factors cannot be forgotten: the ephemeral nature of the inscribed material; the ability of the writers; the instrument of execution; the surfaces for writing; and the positions for writing (from low down at the level of the floor to high up on the wall). There is, however, a further degree of explanation for this heterogeneity of epigraphic technique beside the mechanical. The graphic variations in the Paedagogium graffiti may reflect the diverse cultural level of the various writers. Persons who had received only the first rudiments of elementary instruction would almost certainly have derived their style from the regular epigraphic configuration of formal inscriptions (*quadrata epigraphica*). These individuals would have been accustomed to trace letters approaching the covered capital style. On the other hand, persons participating in superior grades of instruction would have adopted the “official” writing of documents, deriving from the formal epigraphic model: that is, the ancient miniscule cursive which came to be adopted for private use.

In refining the terminology for the hands of those learning to write in Graeco-Roman Egypt, Raffaella Cribiore pointed out that writing was an art that individuals might exhibit even if they were limited to the writing of their own names. She was also able to show that there were styles of writing that could be fitted into a hierarchy, moving from formal stylized scripts for copying literary texts to various more flowing hands for private exercises.⁶⁷ In relation to the Palatine Paedagogium, graffiti that represent the environment of the

adjacent Circus Maximus and nearby Amphitheatrum Flavium confirm this educational range. On the northwest wall of Room 8 is an image of two circus horses, each with a palm in its mouth. A message is scratched above this representation: *Pitholaus Digonus ueneti. pingit Fortunatus Afer*.⁶⁸ Since *uenetus* refers to the color of the Blue faction, one of four *factions* that owned and raced horses in the circus, the graffito has something to do with the personnel or animals associated with this enterprise. The first name is not attested in Latin, and the name Digonus is not known either in Greek or Latin. Pitholaus is attested in Greek, but male Greek names are not known as the names of horses; Dignus, however, could be the name of a horse. A rare signature in Latin is attached to the text.

On the same wall there is a drawing of two gladiators fighting. Above can be read the names *Antigonus/lib(ertus) MMCXII (?) Superbus lib(ertus) (pugnarum) I*. To the right, what appears to be a combat referee (*arbiter muneris*) with a long stick or baton, the *rudis*, in the right hand and a trident (?) in the left. Below, a message is inscribed within a *tabula ansata*: *Casuntius/dicet: accede*. Below the group is the name of the graffitist: *pingit! Zozzo*.⁶⁹ The gladiator named Antigonus was without doubt a *retarius*; his uncovered head, trident, and tall shoulder-guard confirm it. Although it is more difficult to identify his adversary Superbus, a visor shaped to the head, a short sword or dagger, and an elongated quadrangular shield strongly suggest that he was a *secutor*, the traditional adversary of the *retarius*. The text can be read: “Antigonus, freedman. MM (?). Crowns: 12. Superbus, freedman. Combats won: 1. Cassuntius declares: advance [that is, fight (hand to hand)].”⁷⁰ Again there is a signature, this time a Greek name.

These graffiti not only attest to the literacy of the composers but to the obvious readership of their inscriptions. Fortunatus Afer and Zozzo (a name which may be related to Sozon) composed and inscribed their graffiti for an intended constituency. The messages have been formulated as abbreviated textual elements accompanying inscribed visual cues. This was a primary characteristic of epigraphic intensification in the ancient world. The superscribed and enclosed words act as explanatory captions for the graphic display of victory in the circus and amphitheater. To achieve a synthesis, the visual and symbolic syntax of these inscriptions required recognition of pattern, content, and meaning. The signatures of Fortunatus and Zozzo not only confirm an instrumental desire for recognition; they articulate a belief that their signatures would transmit authorship effectively and the knowledge that the servile population of the *Paedagogium* would understand precisely what they wished to convey.

What these graffiti provide are examples of how teachers and students may have engaged in the process of learning to write in a servile environment in which the teaching of writing occurred. It may be dubious to subscribe unequivocally to the suggestion that members of the Graeco-Roman elite

classes would not necessarily have had to do much writing in their own hands because of the availability of scribal slaves.⁷¹ Nonetheless, it is clear that the upper classes of the Roman Empire could rely on the availability of slaves suitably trained in the skills of writing and reading.⁷² Some of these slaves may have been drawn from institutions like the Palatine and Caelian *paedagogia*.⁷³

Naturally, these (and other) references in the Palatine graffiti to chariot racing and gladiatorial combats speak to issues other than levels of education and ranges of literacy in such a community.⁷⁴ Jonathan Edmundson has argued that *ludi circenses* and *munera gladiatoria* were occasions for articulating the component elements of the Roman social order.⁷⁵ The Palatine graffiti that treat these occasions suggest that persons occupying a subordinate position in the hierarchy of social relations drew satisfaction from the public performance of individuals of the same class and condition, and took care that their representations preserved in name and figurative detail the identity, status and endeavor of enslaved gladiators and charioteers. By recording events and individuals in this way on the walls of the *Paedagogium*, the inscribing population can be seen to commemorate the integrity of slave performances in the Circus Maximus that could often result in physical harm or occasionally death. Rather than relegating the performers of public spectacles to the conceptual margins of Roman society, the Palatine graffiti dispense with conventional stigmatizing associations to celebrate the duty of gladiators and charioteers and commemorate the dignity adhering to honorable service. Taken together, such graffiti clarify the ties of social condition, educational level, occupational function, and cultural perspective marking the Palatine community as a distinctive servile household

When speaking about institutions like that located on the Palatine, the evidence points towards such a building as a domicile for mixed groups of manumitted and legally free instructors and slave apprentices to elite or imperial service. This type of community amplifies the usual definition of the Roman *familia*, encompassing a diverse aggregation of pre-pubescent, adolescent, and adult males drawn from a wide range of backgrounds and households – all living under the same roof, sharing the workload, perpetuating a repertoire of desired behaviors and cultural values, and preparing for a common outcome – across generations of training and service. The graffiti also confirm the complex nature of the community of persons residing in this place, a certain proportion of whom possessed the capacity to mark the surfaces of the building in which they lived with their names, activities, interests, opinions, feelings, and desires – in short, how they understood themselves and others in the same group, and how they wished to represent their identity, their relationships, and their thought-world.

The *onomasticon* of slave-names inscribed on the walls of the Palatine Paedagogium contributes to our understanding of the systematic clarity with

which the Roman possessing class distinguished property from persons. It, and the messages associated with some of these names, can also tell us about how imperial and elite *domini* and *dominae* regarded a particular servile group within their extensive and extended household *familiae* and how the slaves thought about themselves and those around them.

In light of the common association in Roman contexts of servile origin with a Greek *cognomen*, some of the most frequently attested slave-names in the *Paedagogium* are Latin – Concessus/-ianus (4); Faustus (4); Felix/-icis (21); Mari(a)nus (8); Primus (6); Victor (12) – and “barbarian” – Afer (16); Ianuarius (6); Nicaeensis (3). A few slave-names with a Greek derivation are also attested in significant numbers: for example Epitynchanus (11); Eutyches (6).⁷⁶

Nine names reflect the conventional Roman practice of identifying slaves as occupying a desired position, or as somehow well-off, successful or lucky. These names are primarily Latin – Faustus, Felix, Fortunatianus, Liberalis, and Optatus – and Greek – Eulogus, Euphemus, and Eutyches; they comprise respectively six of the 63 Latin and three of the 52 Greek names, and number 41 of the overall catalogue of 252 names in the *Paedagogium*. While most of these names conform to the category of *Wunschnamen* (desired *nomina*), we have already seen that Euphemus is an apt moniker for an *opifer*, that is, a slave trained in the provision of medicinal remedies; possibly, in the context of the banquet, in aid of giving diners digestive relief or as a palliative for intoxication. The name Liberalis, with its connotations of decency and fine or noble personal appearance, as well as a metonymic association with wine and wine-drinking, can also be viewed as a name well-suited to service in the imperial *triclinia*.

Some names designated particular *paedagogiani* as “talking tools.”⁷⁷ There are other examples. Scarus and Nastas, scratched respectively once and twice on the northwest walls of Rooms 5 and 7, conform to the Roman practice of assigning slave-names that relate to the category of service provided.⁷⁸ In this case, these slaves may have performed the function of carrying plates to the tables of banquets in the palace; fish and bread would certainly have featured among the variety of foods on the imperial menu.

Personal names, therefore, can be used not only to corroborate many of the functions delineated in the literary record relating to imperial slave-boys and youths but also to confirm the social values of the naming classes towards their property. The onomastic residue confirms the way in which Roman society codified social difference, defining the functions and obligations of individual slaves by means of indicative *nomina*. It also reflects the ambivalent position of a slave in the *domus Caesaris*, at one and the same time nothing more than the *instrumentum* of his imperial *dominus*, yet also a provider of essential services embodied in *nomen* and *corpus*.

In relation to the extended nature of the Palatine *familia*, the personal names identified here open up for consideration the fact that the Paedagogium slaves had a clear concept of their position as a privileged servile population in a special relationship of dependence towards imperial and elite households. “Wish” names or names connoting particular roles confirm the uniformity of rightlessness ascribed to all slaves; they can also be interpreted as expressions of the extent to which slavery in the Paedagogium could be viewed as a process rather than a permanent condition, representing both allocation of social position within a circumscribed servile population, of distinguishing function within the *domus Caesaris* and other elite households, and of conferred status subsequent to manumission.

The archaeological context of the *Paedagogium* and its residue of inscribed graffiti provide only partial information for assessing the nature of a specific servile population in Roman Italy. Nevertheless, while a single authoritative reconstruction is fraught with uncertainty and conjecture, it is possible to produce a range of competing probabilities with respect to a few socio-historical realities: the type and function of slaves in the community of the Palatine *Paedagogium*, the sources of slave supply, the social life expectancy of slaves, and the nature of education and training of *serui Caesaris*.

Contextualizing the material traces of graffiti in respect to the literary and epigraphic record, it is also possible to adduce characteristics of the relations between *paedagogiani* generally, particular associations among individuals, and instances of interaction between persons. These textual and graphic remainders of slave life point to a variety of social relations demarcating a site-specific example of the extended *familia* in antiquity: membership of a larger servile environment (the *paedagogium*), sub-categories of freedpersons and slaves (*paedagogilpaedagogiani*, *custodes*, *procuratores*), and a sense of inclusion or belonging to a community of persons (*pueri*, *iuuenes*, *uernae domini nostri*).

Conclusion

The *comparanda* of literary, documentary, artistic, archaeological and epigraphic evidence addressed in this chapter confirm the analytical and interpretative complexities underlying a study of the family in Roman Italy. What the source material considered here can adduce are the plastic limits inherent in any structural definition of family in ancient Rome – what Huebner identifies as the “internal and external factors ... (influencing) ... household formation and composition.”⁷⁹ Unquestionably the basic unit of political and social relationship, the Roman *familia* may be defined by the persons who inhabit a particular space (*paterfamilias*, *materfamilias*, children, relatives, slaves), the activities and practices which these persons share within

that space (consumption of food and drink; shelter and sleep; leisure and work; reproduction, nurture, maturation and death), and the degree to which these shared activities become institutionalized over time (the *domus*). If we add to this formulation the features commonly associated with extended households – size of the household; complexity of kinship and generational relationships – then it should be clear that certain groups in Roman society outside the usual organizational spectrum conform with the definition of the extended family. Characterized by patrifocal frames of reference (centered on military or pedagogical hierarchies that invest socio-political primacy in the emperor), polysanguineal networks of support and service (in relation to duties of obligation and care and imperatives of training and performance), and institutionalized patterns of activity (perpetuating desired behavior and cultural values), the *cohortes uigilum* of Ostia and the Transtiberim and the mixed-status communities of the Palatine and Caelian *paedagogia* epitomize what may be viewed as multi-functional, multi-generational households, social units that amplify and enrich our understanding of the traditional Roman *familia*.

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Notes

- 1 Hammel and Laslett 1974: 73–5.
- 2 Laslett 1983 (1. solitary, 2. no-family household, 3. nuclear family household, 4. extended family household (= e.g., nuclear + widowed parent), 5. multiple family household (= at least two or more conjugal units living together in one household)). See Huebner’s introductory discussion in this volume for a useful synthesis of the response to Laslett’s empirical studies and an overview of the ideas and issues growing out of his work.
- 3 For the breadth of scholarship treating the family as a key concept in understanding ancient society, see this volume’s bibliography. Here is a select sample of material pertaining to study of the family in Italy and the wider Roman world: Kertzer and Saller 1991; Gardner 1998; Laurence and Stromberg 2011; Harlow and Loven 2012; Nathan 2012.
- 4 For a useful introduction to the issues that feed into this complexity, see Gardner 1998: 1–6.
- 5 Rawson 1987; Dixon 1992.
- 6 For the exception, see Bradley 1991. Otherwise, to cite a single example, of the five previous Roman Family Conferences, held in Canberra, Hamilton, and Fribourg in the period 1981–2007, all of which have resulted in books that have become key volumes to our understanding of the family in Roman times – Rawson 1987, 1996; Rawson and Weaver 1999; George 2005; Dasen and Späth 2010 – no author or participant has considered explicitly the categories of “family” treated in this chapter. Similarly, while the subject and theme of the sixth conference (“Limits and Borders of Childhood and Family,” 17–19 May, Rome) elaborated upon the theme of “limits” grounding Roman Family V – the borders of the Roman Empire

- which have so far not been in the center of the discussion; the limits of human life, those dangerous or “darker” sides of childhood and family; the borderline between childhood/youth and the adult world; and chronological borders, focusing on Late Antiquity, a period intensively studied in the last years comprising a new and flourishing branch of family studies – the conceptualization of “family” followed traditional lines.
- 7 For editorial apparatus and commentary, see *CIL* 14.2, p. 617. On the findspot and citation without comment of other inscriptions to Fortuna at Ostia and Portus, Taylor 1976: 32. On the altar, Jansen, Koloski-Ostrow and Moorman 2011, s.v. *Fortuna*.
 - 8 Meiggs 1997: 305–6 registers the presence of this altar without further note.
 - 9 For details of the calendar recording the religious observances of the *Cohors XX Palmyrenorum*, see Welles *et al.* 1959: 4.
 - 10 Mattingly 2006, 214–16.
 - 11 Lauria 1980; Champeaux 1982, 1987; Simon 1990.
 - 12 Arya 2002: 55. For general bibliography of Fortuna studies, Arya 2002: 39n.120.
 - 13 Richardson 1992: 19–20.
 - 14 Ov. *Fast.* 4.145–50 (Ovid credits the goddess with the ability to conceal the blemishes of women’s bodies from men); Fronto, *de oration.* 5 (Fronto notes that Fortuna featured prominently in baths in the form of shrines or statuary); Clem. Al. *Protr.* 4.44 (Clement informs us directly that “the Romans, although they ascribe their greatest successes to Fortuna, and believe her to be the greatest deity, carry her statue to the latrine and erect it there, thus assigning to her a fit temple”). Fronto and Ovid’s observations situate Fortuna close to the public latrines that were often part of bath complexes, with which they could share water supply and drainage (Robinson 1992: 104).
 - 15 Dedications: Birley 1978: 1534–5 (*CIL* 7.984 = *RIB* 1212; *CIL* 2.2763); cf. Birley 1986: 25 (*RIB* 764). Explanations for dedications: Birley 1978: 1535; Mattingly 2006: 503–4. Apart from Fortuna’s role as the goddess of good luck in war, these studies explain such dedications in various ways: baths were used for gambling, and the gamblers needed to placate the incarnation of Luck or Chance; the bathers had to be naked, with the exception of suitable footwear, and naked men required special protection; bath-houses were prone to fire, due to continuous stoking of their furnaces, and Fortuna’s help was sought to oversee a potentially dangerous building.
 - 16 Hansen 1998 notes that paintings of the goddess Fortuna have been found

in four of the toilets of Pompeii: in that of the *caupona* IX.7.21/24 (now in the archaeological museum of Naples (inv. 112285)); of the suburban baths; of the house of the Greek epigrams (VI.18), no longer visible; and of the estate (*praedia*) of Julia Felix (II.4.3). (The last survives only in the photographic archive at Pompeii (8566 neg. no. 1404). For further detail, see Fröhlich 1991, 40, 59, 286–7, Taf. 10.1.) Fröhlich 1991: 29 explains that the Romans intended the painted image of Fortuna to protect from the “evil eye” in the form of “das ubel Geruch.” This is illustrated by the painted text on the wall of the entrance to a Pompeian latrine in the *caupona* designated above: *cacator caue malu(m)* (“Defecator, beware evil”). The message is written to the left as viewed, above a naked male figure, squatting on a low step in the act of defecation, and bracketed by bearded snakes. Looking on to the right is the figure of Fortuna, larger in scale than the man, holding a rudder in her right hand and cradling a *cornucopia* in her left.

- 17 As David Noy notes perceptively in this volume (Chapter 7), this clarification foregrounds “social relationships rather than patterns of co-residency” (p. 121).
- 18 On the *uigiles* of Imperial Rome, see Baillie Reynolds 1926; Rainbird 1976; Sablayrolles 1996.
- 19 Might we apply to this identifiable spirit of place the term *iuno loci* – esp. with respect to Roman image making, experiential symbolism and spatial concerns?
- 20 See *NSc* 1912: 93; cf. *CIL* 6.2609; 14.215, 223.
- 21 Suet. *Claud.* 25.
- 22 Tac. *Hist.* 1.80; Plut. *Oth.* 3.
- 23 For the Hadrianic context, see Meiggs 1997: 75, 81n.2; Sablayrolles 1996: 292–302. On the Imperial service of the Ostian *uigiles*, Meiggs 1997: 305–8; Sablayrolles 1996: 384.
- 24 For the title *beneficiarius praefecti*, see, for example, *CIL* 6.32707: C(aius) VESIVS C(ai) F(ilius) LEM(onia tribu) CORDVS| DOMO| BONONIA| MILES COH(ortis) VIII PR(aetoriae) BENIFICIARIUS| PRAEFECTI| MILITAVIT ANNIS VI. Cf. *OLD* s.v., noting the term’s frequent substantive force in military language; i.e., referring to soldiers who, through the favor of their commander, were exempt from menial offices, and therefore to free or privileged soldiers. See also Fest. 27L: *beneficarii dicebantur milites, qui vacabant muneris beneficio; e contrario munifices vocabantur, qui non vacabant, sed munus reipublicae faciebant* (“Soldiers who are freed from the service of labor-duty are called “beneficarii”; on

the contrary, those who are not freed from labour but perform state duty are called “munifices”); Caes. *B Civ* 3.88: *beneficiarii superiorum exercituum*. Such *beneficiarii* were usually in attendance upon their commanders, and were promoted by them to office; e.g., Veg. *Mil.* 2.7: *beneficiarii ab eo appellati quod promoventur beneficio tribunorum* (“Beneficiarii” are so-called because they are promoted for service [*beneficium*] to the tribunes”); cf. Caes. *B Civ.* 1. 75; Plin. *Ep.* 10. 21 (32); 10. 27 (36).

- 25 Meiggs 1997: 307 notes that “drinking cups in the mosaic floors point unmistakably to the sale of wine.”
- 26 For the original notification of discovery pertaining to these inscriptions, see Lanciani, *NSc* 1889: 82; Vaglieri, *NSc* 1911, 368. For the transcription with apparatus of the graffiti, see *CIL* 14 suppl., pp. 650–3.
- 27 As Meiggs 1997: 307 suggests, the presence of “bars” in the immediate vicinity of the entrance to the barracks may help to explain the number of inscriptions here. In the street, on each side of the door, were small drinking shops, with mosaic pavements, one bearing the inscription: *Próklos epofêsen*, another having a *krater* with the words [PR]OCLUS FECIT M...C...S(UA) I(MPENSA), while the third has a *krater* only (*NSc* 1911: 209).
- 28 *bucinator*: *CIL* 14. 4526 [M(arcus) MYRENIVS IVLIVS | BVCINATOR COH(orte) VII VIG(ilum)]; *exactus laternarum*: *CIL* 14.4527d [AELIVS MASVETVS | EX ACTVS LATER[nar]VM]; *Severus Alexander*: *CIL* 14. 4256c [SALVO D(omini) N(ostr)i SEVERO ALEXANDRO | PIO FELIC(o) AVG(usto) STATIONEM | [fe]CIMVS PRINCIPIIS DIERV(m) XXX | MIL(ites) COH(orte) I VIG(ilum) SEVERIANE]; *tutus*: *CIL* 14. 4526d; *feliciter*: *CIL* 14.4527.
- 29 The one exception is the subject of discussion – the small niche and altar to Fortuna in the men’s latrine in the south-east corner of the barracks.
- 30 The inscriptions of the *cohors VII uigilum* are located in the smaller garrison of the cohort’s permanent detachment. For details of the original excavation and epigraphic finds, see *Bullettino dell’ Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* 1867: 8–30; *Annali dell’ Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica* 1874: 111–63; cf. *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 1886: 266–9; Lanciani 1898: 549; *CIL* 6.2993–7, 32751. These inscriptions will be discussed shortly.
- 31 These materials date to the period 214–45 CE.
- 32 We might add to these instances expressions of occupation, social

movement, affective relations, and onomastic, geographical, and ethnic origin discovered in the imperial *paedagogia* on the Palatine and Caelian hills. For a synthesis of these inscriptions – found in the remains of buildings associated with the training of slaves from Tiberius to the Severans – in relation to the conceptualization of the extended family, see later discussion in this chapter.

- 33 Found in *regio I insula III*, this registration of occupation and status belongs to the *graphio scriptum* type. It is margined in the style of a *tabula ansata*, and bears the letter X in the right-hand “wing” (denoting, presumably, *uota decennialia*).
- 34 For editorial apparatus and commentary, see *CIL* 14.2: 653.
- 35 *CIL* 6.2998–3091. In addition to the material cited above, from these graffiti we also learn of the drudgery and danger of night duty, including the difficulties experienced by the *sebaciarii* in preparing torches for illumination at night, guaranteeing some degree of security to the inhabitants (Juvenal 3.272ff.).
- 36 *CIL* 6.3010: (centuria) MAXIM(i) VETTI(us) F | LORENTIN[us] | SEBACIARIA | FECI MENSE | IVNIO GRAT[i]AS AG | A(m) GENIO ESCUBITORI } ET C[o]MANIPVL | IS SVIS IN PERPETV | O
- 37 *omnia tuta*: “Everything is safe” (*CIL* 6.2998, 3008, 3015, 3028, 3029, 3053, 3056, 3062, 3076, 3078, 3079); *feliciter*: “Successfully” (*CIL* 6.3001, 3012, 3069); *salvis comanipulis*: “The company is in good health” (*CIL* 6.3029, 3033, 3075, 3079, 3088); *lassus sum*: “I am tired” (*CIL* 6.3072).
- 38 *Digest* 1.15.3.6: *sciendum est praefectum uigilum per totum noctem uigilare debere* (“One should know that the prefect of the *uigiles* must watch throughout the whole night”).
- 39 There is good evidence that in the native Italian cult Fortuna was not so much a deity of chance or luck as the “bringer” of fertility and plenty. Fortuna’s name, from *ferre*, implies the etonym “bringer”; from *fors*, “chance”: Kajanto 1981; Champeaux 1982: 423–6, bibliography 484. Simon 1990: 57–71 also has insightfully examined the early Fortuna cults in Rome that portray Fortuna as a goddess of transportation, derived from the verb “ferre.” It is possible, then, that we find Fortuna in the latrine additionally in accordance with her potency over the “fruits of the earth” and their movement. The agronomical guide L. Junius Moderatus Columella (10.3.16, 84–5; 11.3.12), notes Fortuna’s praise by gardeners, and the entrepreneurial endeavors of *stercorarii* would surely figure in this agricultural ambience. According to the *Tabula Heracleensis* 66–7, special privileges were in force to allow wagons carrying *stercus* – specifically,

“excrement” or more generally, “refuse” – to circulate within the city during the hours of daylight.

- 40 For editorial apparatus and commentary, see *CIL* 14.1: 11.
- 41 For the important role religion played in replacing family among soldiers at Rome in the third century CE, see Noy ([Chapter 9](#)).
- 42 For a detailed overview of the Palatine Paedagogium and its graffiti, see Keegan 2012.
- 43 Paedagogium: *LTUR* vol. 4, 1999, 7–8 (E. Papi); Solin and Itkonen-Kaila 1966: 72–6. Contiguous with it and, in the view of some, also identified with it, are the *domus Gelotiana*, a private house attested epigraphically which was possibly incorporated into the imperial palace [*LTUR* vol. 2, 1995, 110 (E. Papi)], and the *schola Praeconum*, a structure found south of the paedagogium (and possibly connected to it by a corridor), which has been identified as the headquarters of the *praecones*, or heralds [*LTUR* vol. 4, 1999: 254–5 (E. Papi)].
- 44 Solin and Itkonen-Kaila 1966: 3–12. Construction typology: Lugli 1968: 600 (CE 86–92). Brickstamp chronology: *CIL* 15.118a, 1094h, 1449f.; cf. Bloch 1947: 27–9.
- 45 Interpretations: Solin and Itkonen-Kaila 1966: 68–78 (with bibliography). Caput Africae: *CIL* 6.1052, 8982–7: *paedagogi puerorum a Capite Africae*; cf. *CIL* 5.1039 = *ILCV* 1832. Toponym and location: Regionary Catalogue (Regio II); Itinerarium Einsiedeln (f.84a: 196 Valentini-Zucchetti II); *LTUR* vol. 1, 1993: 235 (C. Pavolini); Pavolini 1993: 29–39. Coarelli sees the Caelian as the location for the actual school for imperial pages, while the Palatine structure might have served as their living quarters (Coarelli 2008: 188–9). If this were the case, one might have expected an architectural plan more typical of a building designed for residence rather than occupation: namely, a courtyard surrounded by a series of similarly sized small rooms on all four sides Other scholarship has identified the building on the Palatine as a school for painting for those who had first served an apprenticeship at the *paedagogium ad Caput Africae*; as a prison for the Caelian slaves; as a kind of barracks for foreign soldiers redeployed from the Caelium to guard the western side of the imperial palace; as a vestibule of the palace; as a meeting-place for administrative officials or *procuratores*; as a headquarters for the keepers of imperial vestments; as an infirmary connected to the *Circus Maximus*; and as the *domus Gelotiana* (Suet. *Calig.* 18.3), from which the emperor Gaius (Caligula) helped with preparations for the Circus games.
- 46 Bourdieu 1977: 78–87.

- 47 To negotiate the difficulty of epigraphic bias, encountered when looking at inscriptions generally and graffiti particularly, this comparative approach addresses the form and function of graffiti inscribed by slaves and freedmen living and working in the Palatine Paedagogium under imperial Roman rule.
- 48 Plin. *Ep.* 7.27.13: puer in paedagogio mixtus pluribus dormiebat.
- 49 Plin. *Ep.* 2.17.7, 24.
- 50 Though beyond the scope of this chapter, it would be informative to revisit, in relation to the structural definition of the Paedagogium community, analysis and interpretation of the *domus Caesaris* as the repository of another instance of the extended *familia* – namely, the household of imperial slaves.
- 51 Epitaphs: *CIL* 6.8982–6; dedication (October, A.D. 198): *CIL* 6.1052; private citations: *CIL* 6.7290, 9740; cf. *Dig.* 33.7.12.32.
- 52 For *paedagogi* in the literary and epigraphic record, see Bradley 1991: 37–64, 71–2.
- 53 Mohler 1940: 267–73.
- 54 Bradley 1991: 37–75.
- 55 *CIL* 6.8977–9. In this regard, a graffito on the SE wall of Room 16 (*Graf. Pal.* I.362) refers to an imperial freedman of uncertain name as a *proc(urator)*. Among other duties, a *procurator* was a person given responsibility or charge of administering various positions in the imperial civil administration. Epitaphs at Rome (*CIL* 6.8948, 31863) register certain individuals, for example, as PROC VINORVM and PROC AB ORNAMENTIS. Given the literary associations of *paedagogiani* already enumerated, the person partially recorded in this graffito – ---]atus Aug(usti) lib(ertus) proc(urator) – may have been appointed to look after matters pertaining to either of these aspects of life in the *domus Caesaris*.
- 56 *Pueri* as travel companions: Julian, *Misop.* p. 450 Spanh.; Sen. *Ep.* 87.10, 123.7; Amm. Marc. 29.3.3; table-slaves: *Dig.* 33.7.12.32; bath-house attendants: Plin. *HN* 33.40; sexual objects: Suet. *Ner.* 28; Sen. *Ep.* 95.24; Tertul. *Apol.* 13.
- 57 *Graf. Pal.* I.189, 230. As noted above, *pueri* existed as a legally defined category of person and as part of the *instrumentum* of the possessing class. On the southeast wall of Room 8 (*Graf. Pal.* I.356), the word *iuuenes* could encompass a similar meaning; though technically it should not be permitted to have such an extension of sense, given its association with *collegia* (*iuuenum*) instituted and spread under Augustus, and limited to the

- senatorial and equestrian *ordines*. On the basis of inscribed instances of the word *iuuenes* in this and similar contexts, Mohler (1937: 462, 479) argued that freedmen and their sons were welcomed in *paedagogia* throughout the empire.
- 58 Clothing: Sen. *De uit. beat.* 17.2; Amm. Marc. 26.6.15, 29.3.3; hairstyle: Mart. 3.55.30, 58.29–31; Sen. *Ep.* 95.24; feminine appearance: Sen. *Ep.* 123.7.
- 59 Combination of form and function: Plin. *HN* 33.26.
- 60 Graf. Pal. I.272, 278, 305, 317, 326, 330, 332, 342, 365.
- 61 Graf. Pal. I.53; Graf. Pal. I.61.
- 62 Graf. Pal. I.272. For another interpretation of this abbreviation, see the discussion below on *uestiarii*.
- 63 Cic. *Pro Rosc.* 41.120: inter suos omnium deliciarum atque omnium artium puerolos ex tot elegantissimis familiis lectos.
- 64 Dig. 33.7.12.32 (Ulpian): Si instructum fundum legasset, ea paedagogia, quae ibi habebat, ut, cum ibi uenisset, praesto essent in triclinio, legato continentur.
- 65 *Capillati*: Petron. 27; Mart. 2.57.5; *comati*: Mart. 12.70.9; 12.97.4; Suet. *Cal.* 35; *criniti*: Sen. *Ep.* 119.14; Mart. 12.49.1; *crispuli*: Sen. *Ep.* 95.24; *calamistrati*: Isid. *Orig.* 10.57; Apul. *Met.* 2.19. These identifying traits are reflected in a catalogue of personal names drawn from the *Paedagogium* graffiti. E.g., on the northwest wall of Room 5 (Graf. Pal. I.2), a person scratched the word *Capillatus*, a term which we have seen was used to describe long-haired slave boys and youths serving at banquets in a variety of roles.
- 66 For an overview of the tools associated with ancient writing, see the prospectus of the *Corpus Instrumentorum Scribendi* project (<http://www.palaeographia.org/cipl/corpus.htm>), initiated by Professor David Ganz (Kings College London) and R. A. Rosenfeld (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies).
- 67 Cribiore 1996: 3, 7.
- 68 Graf. Pal. I.298.
- 69 Graf. Pal. I.304.
- 70 The MM may be an accidental repetition (dittography) of the abbreviation for the single participle *missus*, acknowledging the defeat of the named gladiator Antigonus and his request that the *munerarius* stopped the fight

and sent him alive from the arena. Its relation to the other signs is problematic.

71 McDonnell 1996.

72 Harris 1989, 249; Horsfall 1995; cf. Starr 1990–1.

73 Cf. e.g., *CIL* 6.9449: Pudens M. Lepidi l. grammaticus | Procurator eram Lepidae Moresque regebam | dum uixi mansit Caesaris illas nurus | Philologus discipulus. Dessau noted that Philologus, student of the *grammaticus* Pudens M. Lepidi l., can be identified with Ti. Claudius Augusti lib. Philologus *ab epistulis* (*CIL* 6.8601). Whether Pudens had taught at some point in one of the imperial *paedagogia* or Philologus was sold to the emperor (Mohler 1940: 267n.10), both the level of education and the ability of the student are indicative of a depth of training for *paedagogiani* of the *domus Caesaris*.

74 Gladiator, charioteer, and *uenator* inscriptions comprise ca. 40 percent of surviving graffiti-drawings in the Roman empire For a useful catalogue of these inscriptions, see Langner 2001: Taf. 37–73 (fig. 769–1164). Palatine graffiti relating to this subject include: *Graf. Pal.* I.58 (palm); 97 (athlete); 99, 101, 109, 176, 310, 319, 324, 350, 351, 352, 353, 358 (the personal name, Victor); 302 (the bust of a charioteer, with palms and boxes, underneath the name Gordius); 303 (the names Gordianus and Isapeodoros, followed by an invocation in Greek to win); 306 (gladiator).

75 Edmundson 1996: 111.

76 In more general terms, some of the most popular Latin and Greek slave-names (according to Solin 1996: 2001; cf. Gordon 1924) are also attested in the Paedagogium. In addition to Faustus, Felix, and Primus, these include Hermes, Hilarus, and Fortunatus/-inus.

77 Varro, *RR* 1.17.1: *instrumenti genus uocale*.

78 *Graf. Pal.* I.22; 261, 262. The *scarus* was a sea-fish (the parrot-wrasse) and one species (*S. Cretensis*), found in the Mediterranean, was highly prized by ancient Greek and Roman epicures; used as a substantive, it could refer to a well-kneaded cake.

79 Huebner ([Chapter 1](#), p. 18).

Extended Families and Family Substitutes among Migrants in the Roman World

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Migration was an integral part of many lives in the ancient world, whether it was voluntary or forced. In terms of activities which have left tangible evidence, it affected everything from the naming of a baby to the choice of a burial method. Its effects on household formation and family relationships have received little explicit attention in discussions of the Roman family, even though the population of the city of Rome always contained a substantial proportion of migrants.¹ Most migrants who moved from one province or state to another formed small minorities within their new communities, but this chapter will focus on two areas where they may have been in the majority: Delos under Roman influence at the end of the second century BCE, and the military population of the city of Rome around the third century CE. These are two groups whose enthusiastic adoption of the epigraphic habit means that they are unusually well documented.²

The source material used here does not provide direct information about living arrangements: someone who commemorated an uncle did not necessarily live with him.³ It will therefore be necessary to think about social relationships rather than patterns of co-residency. The people discussed would in any case have had unusual households: traders with bases on Delos sometimes had business interests in other locations and perhaps residences in all of them; soldiers serving at Rome must have lived officially in their barracks even if they had family members elsewhere in Rome.

Migration disrupted whatever living arrangements were normal at home. For example, an individual who might at home have remained in his original household after marriage and eventually formed part of an extended family could, if he married after migration, form a simple family household purely because he had no other relatives with him. Alternatively, migration might throw together people who would not have co-resided at home, for example brothers or cousins who would normally have formed their own simple family households, but combined in an extended family at their destination. Modern evidence suggests that this is most likely to happen with poor migrants (Glick, Bean, and Van Hook 1997), unlike the groups studied in this chapter. The

presence of relatives and others from the same home community at the destination may have been one of the factors which encouraged further migration (the process of “chain migration”), although it seems that nineteenth-century migration in England, the United States and northern Italy did not substantially increase the formation of extended family households other than by women arriving to marry into existing households (Ruggles 1987: 54, 220; Kertzer and Hogan 1990: 491–3; Boyd 1989: 639–41). These are issues which cannot be addressed directly, but some of the inscriptions may be suggestive.

Delos

The preponderance of migrants from the Eastern Mediterranean in the population of Delos in the late second and early first centuries BCE, as attested by epigraphic sources, is well known. The original inhabitants were removed after 167 BCE and a remarkably cosmopolitan society developed until the island was sacked in 88 BCE and the massacre and subsequent economic decline brought it to a rapid end. Relatively little attention has been paid to the circumstances of individual free migrants. Did they come alone or in family groups? If they formed families on Delos, did they do so with others of the same geographical origin? Did they intend to settle on Delos permanently or to return home at some point? Were extended family connections important in bringing new migrants to Delos? The focus here will be on people from Asia Minor and Syria,⁴ since the circumstances of those who came to Delos from mainland Greece, particularly Athens, were rather different, and it was much easier for them to move between the island and their home.

There are clearly no direct answers to these questions. All discussion has to be based on the inscriptions which have survived: primarily building inscriptions, honorific texts in the form of religious dedications, lists of ephebes, and epitaphs. Identifying family connections beyond the nuclear is a haphazard activity, since relationships are rarely spelled out. Epitaphs from the burial island of Rheneia do not normally name the commemorator, although the practice of erecting statues on Delos itself to relatives and friends provides some compensation for this. Most epitaphs, which were inscribed on relatively portable altars and stelae, have not been preserved *in situ*, so family connections which the original layout of the tomb would have clarified are now lost (Couilloud 1974: 258).

The use of the $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\ \chi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\rho\epsilon$ formula and of local styles of stele or altar indicate that standard Delian practices were preferred by migrants to ancestral ones. Greek was the common language, widely used by Italians for public purposes (Adams 2003: 645–9). It is likely that many people from the East, in

particular, acquired the epigraphic habit through living on Delos, and would not have left inscriptions if they had remained at home, although there is one example of an ex-voto by a Tyrian in Phoenician, with a Greek date, from the mid-second century BCE (Baslez and Briquel-Chatonnet 1990). It should be remembered that not everyone who died on Delos necessarily intended to move there permanently. Pharnakes and Myron from Amisos were killed when shipwrecked on Seriphos, and commemorated on Rheneia by their friend Protos (Couilloud 1974, no.475). These are the sort of people for whom Delos may only have been a temporary residence. However, Protos had a statue erected there by his four sons (ID 1984), which suggests a much stronger bond; he was probably a permanent resident if his friends were not.

Around 100 BCE, a statue was erected with this inscription (ID 1723):

[Φι]λ[ος]το[κ]ράτης ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Φιλο[στράτου] Ἀσκαλωνίτην
τραπεζίτευοντα ἐν [Δήλῳ], Διόδοτος Ἀντιπά[τ]ρ[ου] Ἀσκαλωνίτης τὸν
ἑαυτοῦ θεῖον καὶ τροφέα [καὶ] σωτήρα καὶ εὐεργέτην Διὶ Κυνθίῳ καὶ
Ἀθηνᾷ Κυνθίαι.

Philostratos son of Philostratos, Ascalonite, banker on Delos. Diodotos son of Antipatros, Ascalonite, (honored) his uncle and guardian and savior and benefactor. To Zeus Kythnios and Athena Kythnia.

Philostratos is a well-known figure who is mentioned in 18 inscriptions including a eulogy by the poet Antipater of Sidon; see Santamaria (1982) and Leiwo (1989) for full discussion. He was active on Delos c.140/130–90 BCE, and acquired Neapolitan citizenship towards the end of that period, although there is no reason to think he had any direct connection with Naples. He provided various benefactions, particularly a portico in the Agora of the Italians. He had a wife and children (ID 1719–22, 2628). His nephew Diodotos is known only from this inscription. The use of the term τροφεύς suggests that Philostratos had played a part in Diodotos' upbringing, and there is no sign of the presence of Antipatros the father on Delos, so Diodotos had probably been with his uncle for most of his life. However, the language of "savior and benefactor" was normally reserved there for honoring rulers, or benefactors of the Athenian people. Diodotos was apparently part of an extended family group, but he was not quite in the position of an adopted son or he would not have used such fulsome language.

How exceptional was this family? The best evidence for family migration to Delos is the presence of numerous youths explicitly labeled as foreigners in lists of ephebes or dedicatory inscriptions from gymnasia, namely males in their mid/late teens taking part in educational and ritual activities. According to the calculations of Baslez (2002: 56), in the late second century BCE 14 percent of ephebes were Roman/Italian and 34 percent oriental. In one list of 91 names, dated 119/18, over half were from eastern cities (Rauh 1993, 46; ID 2598). Participation in such an institution suggests that they were there in

family groups, since anyone of this age-group who had migrated independently would presumably need to spend his time working rather than living an ephebic lifestyle. It indicates that Delos was the family's primary, if not sole, residence, and that they expected to remain there. Shared involvement in the ephebate would create links between people which went beyond the familial and communal, but it is significant that ephebes' ethnics were normally recorded. It was an institution for promoting shared values, but evidently not for eradicating the past.

Diodotos may have been an ephebe himself: an Ascalonite whose name is lost but was the son of [Antipa]tros appears in a list from between 105 and 102 BCE (ID 2599). In the case of an ephebe such as this, there are several possible backgrounds:

1. the youth was a recent arrival on Delos, with his parents;
2. the youth was a recent arrival on Delos, joining a father who had migrated earlier;
3. the youth was born on Delos, to parents from Ascalon;
4. the youth was born on Delos, to a father from Ascalon and a mother from elsewhere;
5. the youth had come to Delos to join a more distant relative, e.g. an uncle like Philostratos, or to join other Ascalonites who were not related to him.

The last possibility is the one of most relevance here, and is the most plausible for Diodotos. Evidence for the importance of migration of children at Rome has recently been produced from isotopic analysis of teeth from the Isola Sacra cemetery (Prowse *et al.* 2007). The authors suggest that single males in early adulthood may not have predominated as much in migration as is usually supposed (e.g., Noy 2000: 66), and that could perhaps be extrapolated to other places such as Delos. Migration of children would normally be expected to involve nuclear families (possibility 1 above), but the case of Diodotos suggests that other scenarios are possible.

Marriage patterns among migrants to Delos are important for the understanding of family relationships. It is unusual for a husband and wife recorded together to be given the same ethnic, for example Hermione and Demetrios, both from Antioch (SEG 31.731). This is probably because an ethnic applied to the one named first could be assumed to apply to the other, for example Euporia of Antioch, wife of Eunikos (Couilloud 1974: no.61). It is also possible, however, that the second person was simply regarded as having no ethnic affiliation. There are some cases where husband and wife have different ethnics, suggesting marriages which were made on Delos (possibility 4 above):

- A statue of Herakleides son of Aristion of Tarentum, banker, put up by his wife Myrallis daughter of Menekrates, Syracusan, and their five sons and two daughters (ID 1716, dated 166–160 BCE).
- A stele depicting an apparently married couple with an epitaph for Ikonion from Antioch and Aristonikos from Athens (Couilloud 1974, no.90).
- A similar stele for Sophoklea from Dardanos and Alexandros from Athens (Couilloud 1974, no.89).
- A stele depicting three figures, probably parents with their son between them: Mysta daughter of Mnaseas of Laodicea; Apollonios son of Apollonios of Alexandria; Apollonios son of Dionysios of Alexandria (Couilloud 1974, no.107). This suggests that a child born on Delos would be given his father's ethnic. The younger Apollonios cannot have been an Alexandrian citizen, since he did not have two Alexandrian parents and presumably would not have performed his ephebate at Alexandria.
- The commemoration of Dionysios son of Sostratos, Athenian, and Rhomatha daughter of Menippos, Antiochene (Couilloud 1974: no.180). They are believed to be son and mother, but presumably Sostratos was an Athenian too.

Marriages between free migrants of different places of origin are almost never attested at Rome (Noy 2000: 74), perhaps because the much greater size of different migrant groups made endogamy easier. The offspring of such marriages would have been in the very unusual position (for the ancient world) of having relatives in two other, completely different places. The effects of this cannot be traced, but it may have been of significance when the economy of Delos collapsed after the sack of 88 BCE and survivors of the massacre (which no doubt included oriental residents as well as Italians⁵) emigrated. If such marriages were made on Delos, there must have been marriageable females among the migrants there. The commercial opportunities which attracted people were very largely limited to men. There is unlikely to have been a demand for free female labor in domestic service or textile production when slave labor was so plentiful, so independent female migration would not have been common.

There are a number of epitaphs for female migrants identified by a patronymic rather than a husband's name, for example Nikaia of Ptolemais (probably the one in Phoenicia), daughter of Nikanor (Couilloud 1974: no.32). The stele shows a seated woman and a young man, suggesting that she was commemorated by her son. Presumably they were on Delos as permanent migrants. In context the tombs may have shown other family relationships; joint epitaphs for husband and wife, or naming one in the epitaph of the other, were not normal Delian practices. Whether or not Nikaia was a wife and

mother, the fact that she was commemorated as a daughter suggests that she was born on Delos or came there with her father.

In 115/14 BCE, statues were erected anonymously to the Sidonian sister and brother Isidotē and Dionysios, children of Dionysios (ID 2091), again suggesting a woman whose most important connection was with her natal family, whether or not she was married. A more perplexing case commemorates in verse Alinē of Ascalon, who was pregnant when she died (Couilloud 1974: no.468). She is described as μόνην πλανῆτιν δημότιν λελεῖ < μ > μένη, which Couilloud translates as “une solitaire itinérante, une femme du peuple abandonnée” (“a solitary wanderer, a woman of the people abandoned”). She would hardly have received a stele and eight-line verse epitaph if she had really been abandoned. Could she have been left on Delos while her husband was engaged in business elsewhere, or had gone back to Ascalon? Or was she commemorated by other Ascalonites? The description suggests a new arrival, perhaps one who had come to Delos to join her existing husband (cf. possibility 2 above), or in order to get married.

There are a number of examples of large family groups, like Protos and his four sons discussed above. A tomb on Rheneia commemorates the five sons of Apollodoros of Anthedon, probably the city in Palestine rather than Boeotia (Couilloud 1974: no.160) – perhaps the members who died young of a nuclear family which migrated to Delos or was formed there. In 128/7, Achaios son of Apollonios of Hieropolis built a temple to his ancestral gods Adatos and Atargatis on behalf of himself, his wife Euboula, his children Apollonios, Dionysia, Protogeneia, Achaios and Lysimachos, and his brothers Apollonios, Lysimachos and Protogenos (ID 2226). The nuclear family may have migrated from Hieropolis or been formed on Delos, or they could have arrived as an extended family with Achaios’ brothers too. However, the brothers were not necessarily all present on Delos, and in families with extensive trading interests it would be natural for some members to settle on Delos while others remained in their home city or managed the business in other trading centres. Absence is suggested more strongly in a dedication to Heracles and Haurona, gods of Iamneia, by Zenorodoros, Patron and Diodotos, Iamnites, on behalf of themselves, unnamed brothers, relatives and co-citizens who participated in cult banquets (ID 2308; Baslez 1988: 140).

In a rare example of epitaphs being preserved *in situ* on Rheneia, an excavation of two linked funerary enclosures in 1975–7 shows the cooperation of an extended family of Tyrian origin (Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1997). Athenais, daughter of Dies of Tyre, built a family monument. Two members of the family, Dies and Heliodoros, sons of Dies, were ephebes in 104/3 BCE as Tyrians, and later acquired Athenian citizenship with their father, who was probably Athenais’ brother (Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1997: 636–7). One member of the family evidently lived in Athens, as Athenion, envoy of Mithridates, was welcomed there in 88 BCE in the house of Dies, a

wealthy man with revenue from Delos (Athenaeus, V 49 Kaibel). A stele has an eight-line verse epitaph for a girl with Roman citizenship, the daughter of Artemisia (perhaps Athenais' sister) and Q. Furius (Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1997: 648–51). Several other people in the complex had Roman or Italian names, including Ammia daughter of Sosis (Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1997: 652), probably to be identified with Sosis wife of Ariston son of Archelaos of Tyre (ID 2130). There was also one Antiochene. Le Dinahet-Couilloud believes there must be links between the families in the tomb, even if they cannot all be restored, and she writes (1997: 665–6, my translation): “These documents also illustrate the complexity of Delian society; business relationships, certainly, but also matrimonial alliances united the notables of the most entrepreneurial communities of Delos at the end of the Hellenistic era.”

A group of Delian stelae formerly at Shanganagh Castle in Ireland was acquired by Captain Rowan Hamilton in the 1820s (Nicolson 1943: 200–1). It seems likely that he took them from one place on Rheneia, and they were perhaps from an enclosure like that of Athenais. Five commemorate Ascalonites, including four members of the same family: Dionysios, his two sons and one grandson (Purser 1925: nos 6, 7, 10, 71, 72).

- Dionysios son of Prytanis, Ascalonite
- Nikandros son of Dionysios, Ascalonite
- Diopeithes son of Dionysios, Ascalonite
- Artemisia daughter of Philē, Ascalonite
- Diophantos son of Diopeithes, Ascalonite.

Artemisia and Philē may have belonged to the same family as the others, or the tomb may have been shared by unrelated Ascalonites.

An extended family of Velians emerges in a semi-circular exedra in the Portico of Antigonos (ID 1965). Agathokles son of Hermon honored his brother Thrasydeios, who was also honored by his own children Hermon and [...]*ana*. Thrasydeios reciprocated to his brother, with Hermon who was probably Agathokles' son. Elsewhere, Hermon son of Thrasydeios was honored by his wife Theodotē daughter of Dioskourides (who was not said to be a Velian) (ID 2368). There was clearly cooperation between uncles and nephews/nieces in this family; perhaps the inscription even represents a household arranged on the *frèreche* principle with married brothers living together.⁶

Tréheux (1992: 76) suggests a possible stemma for the family of Iason from Arados, based on an exedra from the South Portico with inscriptions for six statues (IG XI.4.1203). The people named are:

- Eukleia of Arados, daughter of Antipatros, wife of Iason

- Timokleia, daughter of Strato
- Strato, son of Iason
- Timokleia(?), daughter of Sillis, wife of Strato
- Sillis of Arados
- [...]jeia, daughter of Iason, wife of Sillis.

Eukleia of Arados and Iason appear to be the parents of Strato and [...]jeia who married Sillis of Arados: Sillis's daughter Timokleia married her uncle Strato. A marriage between uncle and niece (sister's daughter) would fit a scenario where one member of the family moved to Delos and then sent for another, but the evidence would only reveal such a marriage if the whole family was recorded on Delos, as in this case.

Family relationship is much less clear in a stele depicting two women, one with a young child and a baby, and this epitaph (Couilloud 1974: no.187):

Μυρσίνη Ἐτο[ρ]ηία Δέκμου Ῥωμαία ἀδελφὴ δὲ Κοῖντου Αὐφιδίου
Κασιοδώρου χρηστὴ χαῖρε.

Σαβεῖ Πύρρου Ἀπάμισσα χρηστὴ χαῖρε.

According to Delian naming conventions (Couilloud 1974: 332) the first woman was Myrsinē the slave of a Roman citizen D. Heterēius, and her brother Kasiodoros was the freedman of a Q. Aufidius. The second woman's name is the vocative of Sabeis, daughter of Pyrros, of Apamea. Couilloud believes they are sisters-in-law, commemorated by their husband or brother. Did the whole family come from Apamea, or did Sabeis marry someone from a different background to her own? Slavery complicates the picture in this case but family ties could sometimes be preserved despite it.

Life on Delos clearly threw together people of different geographical backgrounds in ways other than marriage. One epitaph on a plain stele lists 22 individuals, including one mother and daughter, with a variety of ethnics from all around the Eastern Mediterranean, such as Joppa, Apamea, Cyrene, Nabatea (Couilloud 1974: no.418). All the deceased were slaves of Protarchos, and were probably killed together in an accident, such as a workshop fire. Another inscription commemorates two people who survived a fire where 30 were killed (an Antiochene woman and Theodoros of Laodicea in Phoenicia were commemorated by Meges the Phoenician), perhaps the same event, as suggested by Couilloud (1974: no.477). However, it is possible, although it was not normal Delian practice, that the 22 slaves pooled their resources to set up a common tomb as was often done by slave and ex-slave households and work-groups at Rome.⁷

There is one case where a house can be linked with occupation by a household not based on kinship (perhaps to be identified rather as a "houseful"). Rauh

(1993: 222–31) discusses the living arrangements of the slaves and freedmen of the Paconii in the House of the Hermes, which “was not a ‘single family dwelling,’ therefore, but the communal residence or ‘club house’ of the Paconian slave *sunetheia*”; it was not the home of the Paconii patrons although they would presumably use it when visiting the island. The only common feature of the occupants was the fact of belonging to various Paconii. Slaves of Italians did not normally give any other indication of their own origins, so it is not clear (although likely) that they were from the Eastern Mediterranean. The households of Protarchos and the Paconii would both have been places where people of a variety of backgrounds were brought together, few people had close kin with them, and the household provided a family-substitute. The Latin curse tablet of T. Paconius, gives an alternative insight into such relationships (ID 2534; Adams 2003: 680–2). Twenty individuals are cursed, most of whom seem to be freeborn Roman citizens. There are three other Paconii, all with different *praenomina*, and some people with purely Greek names such as Serapion son of Serapion. The range of people hated by this Paconius was a wide one.

It is likely that shared nationality also offered a substitute for family. However, ethnic affiliation could change, as it did for Philostratos. Pouilloux (1973: 412) reconstructs the family of Timarchos of Salamis (Cyprus), who had one grandson with Tarentine citizenship and one with Athenian, as well as one Salaminian. Were these technicalities which did not interfere with ordinary social relationships, or would they be accompanied by transfer to a different social milieu? Timarchos’ son Simalos, described in different places as Salaminian and Tarentine, was compared to Alkinoos in an elaborate poem commissioned by his Athenian friend Stolos, and it is unclear whether the splendors of his hospitality were offered at Salamis or Delos (ID 1533; Pouilloux 1973: n.61). The Salaminians are also discussed by Baslez (1994). Her slightly different stemma illustrates the mobility of some families. Simalos son of Timarchos was gymnasiarch at Salamis c.107–105 BCE, and was on Delos with Tarentine citizenship by 100 when he was part of an association of Italians (ID 1755). His son Simalos did ephebic activities on Delos in 103/2 and at Athens in 101/0 BCE. Another Timarchos, a distant cousin according to Baslez’s reconstruction, had Athenian citizenship and was an ephebe at Athens in 106 BCE, but was buried on Rheneia (Couilloud 1974: no.210).

Baslez (1988: 146–7) discusses the associations (*koina*) of orientals formed at Delos, Athens, and Rhodes, and concludes that they were not corporations, professional associations, or exclusive ethnic groupings, but fundamentally different from typical Greek voluntary associations: based on worship of their own gods by people who felt uprooted, but tried to integrate into the Greek milieu through the use of Greek terminology and the Greek concept of euergetism. The worship of ancestral gods probably provided an alternative

support network for migrants without family on Delos (Hasenohr 2007: 87). The Jewish and Samaritan synagogues are examples of this, and also offered an extension of the network, since two men honored for their benefactions by the Delian Samaritans came from Crete and were probably not resident on Delos (IJudO Ach66–7). Italians had their own *collegia*, nominally religious in function, and these generally used Latin in their own inscriptions as part of their “institutionalised collective activity,” while the Competalists consisted primarily of slaves and ex-slaves who were of Greek origin and therefore used Greek (Adams 2003: 667–8).

Dedications to ancestral gods were made by, for example, people from Berytos (ID 1783, 1785). The Poseidoniasts of Berytos were clearly more than a religious association, since their official title was “the *koinon* of the Berytian Poseidoniasts, merchants and shipmasters and receivers,” and the Heracliasts of Tyre were “merchants and shipmasters” (ID 1519). The gods represented Melkart (Heracles) and Baal Berith (Poseidon) (Hasenohr 2007: 84). Baslez and Briquel-Chatonnet (1990: 29) suggest that the sanctuary founded in 154/3 BCE by the Tyrians may have been for visitors to Delos rather than permanent residents at first, and that the first indication of definitive immigration is the ephebe lists from 119/18 BCE. There was an association of merchants and shipmasters from Laodicea in Phoenicia which honored a member of the Seleucid royal family ca.178 BCE (IG XI.4 1114; Baslez and Briquel-Chatonnet 1990: n.22). The Italians could act as a collective too, for example when they honored Philostratos the banker and his sons (ID 1722).

Philostratus was responsible for making dedications to numerous gods, including Astarte, Aphrodite Ourania and Poseidon of Ascalon on behalf of the city of Ascalon and his wife and children. These dedications come from the Syrian Sanctuary, where a variety of religious activities seem to have taken place. The Syrian divinities Hadad and Atargatis were worshipped there. Dedicators to them in the late second and early first centuries included Romans (ID 2255, 2266, 2269), Laodiceans (ID 2259, 2262, 2264, 2297), Antiochenes (ID 2256, 2285; SEG 31.731), and a Hieropolitan (ID 2261). The wording of ID 2255 is a reminder that people with Roman citizenship were not necessarily of Italian ancestry: P. Plotius son of Lucius, Roman, built the exedra for himself and his wife and children, for his grandson C. Plotius son of Gaius, for Heras son of Diokles from Seleucia and his mother, on behalf of the Athenian people and the Roman people, as an offering to Hagnē Aphrodite, and Hadad (90/89 BCE).

People who made such dedications often honored their relatives. Extended family connections can be traced for a number of migrants to Delos. They can be assumed to have existed for many more, since their discovery in the evidence is so fortuitous. The connections may have been instrumental in bringing people to Delos, or may have developed in importance among those

who found themselves on Delos for other reasons. For the no doubt numerous migrants who did not have such family, membership of *koina* which officially worshipped national gods but in fact had much wider functions offered some compensation.

Soldiers at Rome

In the third century CE, there may have been 17,000 provincial soldiers stationed in Rome at any one time.⁸ The Praetorian Guard had a nominal strength of 15,000, recruited principally in the Danubian provinces by this time, and there were up to 2,000 *equites singulares*, mostly from the Balkans although sometimes referred to as Batavi, and an unknown number of sailors from the fleet (often recruited in Egypt or Thrace).⁹ There were also soldiers from the legions stationed in Rome in the *Castra Peregrinorum* for a variety of reasons. Troops served for 16 or 17 years (praetorians) or 25 years (*equites*). They lived at least officially in barracks away from the general population, and they often tended to return home after their military service although significant numbers remained in Rome or Italy, probably those who had formed families in particular (Durry 1938: 301–2; Coulston 2000: 82–5; Ricci 2005: 88). By the third century there was no longer any legal obstacle to soldiers marrying while still serving.¹⁰

Within their own world, these soldiers form a comparable population to the migrants on Delos: a society where migration was the norm and therefore something to be proud of rather than to disguise, where the pull factors attracted adult men directly but perhaps family members indirectly, and where the epigraphic habit was pronounced, in the form of epitaphs and dedications to gods, often ancestral ones.

Soldiers normally began their military service in their late teens, so it is unlikely that many would have been married before they enlisted, given that all studies of Roman age at marriage have accepted that men married much later than women, typically no earlier than their mid-twenties (Scheidt 2007: 421–3). They are unlikely to have come to Rome with parents (although it is possible that parents sometimes joined them later). However, the importance of brothers among soldiers, and among migrants at Rome generally, is clear from epitaphs (Noy 2000: 67–75). Thirteen percent of explicitly immigrant soldiers and 19 percent of male pagan civilian immigrants were commemorated by brothers (sometimes brothers who were soldiers).

T. Aurelius Primus, *librarius* (military clerk) commemorated his brother aged 16, M. Ulpius Ursinus son of Ulpius Respectus from Aelius Cetius in Noricum (CIL VI 33036). This is likely to be a case where the presence of an older brother at Rome encouraged a younger brother to join him there. The

younger brother was probably intending to enlist when he was old enough. The different *nomina* could indicate that they were half-brothers or that the elder brother only got a Roman name on enlistment, like the Egyptian Apion who joined the fleet at Misenum and acquired the name Antonius Maximus (BGU II 423).

The uncle-nephew relationship whose importance can be glimpsed among migrants on Delos is of more explicit significance among military migrants at Rome. In some cases where an uncle commemorates a nephew or vice versa, both are soldiers or veterans. Some examples are:

- M. Aurelius Nundinus, *avunculus* and *veteranus* (of what is not stated) commemorates his *nepos*, the praetorian L. Septimius Carus (AE 1992: 135).
- P. Aelius Mucianus, *speculator* of Legio II Adiutrix, is commemorated by his *avunculi* Vitalianus and Vitalis (who are not said to be military) (CIL VI 3562).
- The *evocatus* (a praetorian veteran who had stayed in Rome after his normal service) M. Aurelius Sabinus aged 56 is commemorated by his brother Aurelius Crispinus, also an *evocatus*; his *filiaster* (probably illegitimate son) M. Aurelius Sabinus; *nepotes* (presumably nephews) Aurelii Sabinianus and Crispinus; sister Aurelia Maxima; and *alumnus* Aurelius Marcianus, all *heredes* (CIL VI 32880; Watson 1989: 543–4).
- Flavius Cupitus was veteran of a (praetorian?) cohort and *avunculus* of Aurelius Aprilis *sesquiplicarius*; the rest of the text is lost (CIL VI 3463).
- Annius Verus, *eques singularis* and *avunculus*, commemorates Annius Lupercus aged nineteen (CIL VI 3185) – perhaps another case of a younger relative who had come to Rome to enlist and died before he could do so.

None of these inscriptions refers to geographical origin, but all the people involved must have been migrants. M. Aurelius Sabinus evidently had his sister with him in Rome, and there are other examples of this among the praetorians, such as Q. Sittius Iulianus who commemorated his sister Iulia Donata (Noy 2000: 70–1; CIL VI 32730). It is possible that the sisters were there not primarily because of their brothers, but because of their unnamed husbands: if a soldier serving in Rome wanted to marry, a natural choice would be the sister of a fellow-soldier from the same homeland (perhaps the same village).

Other inscriptions suggest women coming to Rome to marry men from the same place already serving there. When the *eques singularis* Ulpius Ianuarius died at 29 and was commemorated by his fellow-*eques* Octavius Dignus and his wife Aurelia Novana, he was described as a native of Pannonia Superior

from the territory of Savaria and the village of Voleucio (CIL VI 3300); this indicates pride in a very specific place which would have had significance to few people at Rome. It may also suggest that the place was of significance to the commemorators; perhaps Novana had come from there to Rome too. Valeria Palladia commemorated two brothers: her husband Valerius Proclianus aged 44, *protector* (an honorary military rank), and her *cognatus* Valerius Nepotianus aged 30, *exarc(h)us promotus domnicus* (a cavalry officer) (AE 1946, 127 = 1949, 190). *Cognatus* may be simply mean “brother-in-law” here, but it is also possible that Palladia and her husband’s family were *cognati* before the marriage.

There are also cases of cousins commemorating each other where both were soldiers:

- [name lost] Dolens, a praetorian aged 30 from Pautalia, is commemorated by his *consobrinus* and heir Sebastianus of the same cohort (CIL VI 2616).
- Septimius Adiutor, an *eques singularis* aged 23 or 33, is commemorated by his *consobrinus* Longinius Victor, a veteran (CIL VI 3285).
- Aurelius Pius, a praetorian aged 36 who had served ten years, is commemorated by his brother Aurelius Pompeianus of Legio II Parthica, his *consobrinus* Valerius Valens of the same praetorian cohort, and his wife Mamia Primilla (CIL VI 3894 = 32690).

Two cousins could be exactly the same age and therefore better able to enlist together than two brothers; that may be the case with the Aurelii above.

Sometimes one relative is not stated to have a military connection, which could be because he really did not or because it was not felt necessary to mention it. For example:

- Valentinus, heir, commemorates his *avunculus* Aurelius Victorinus, praetorian *evocatus* aged 80 and *amita* Aurelia Valentina aged 77 (CIL VI 2774).
- Aelius Vitalio aged 26 and Valeria Glauce aged 35, *nepot[ibus?]*, are commemorated by their *avunculus* Germanius Super, a veteran (CIL VI 3467).
- Arrius Cuptianus, *nepos*, is commemorated by Arrius [-]tius, *eques (singularis?)* (AE 1975: 86).
- The praetorian Flavius Mucianus from Nicopolis, aged 30, is commemorated by his *consobrinus* Iulius Valerianus (AE 1980, 141).
- Ulpius Quintianus, an *eques singularis* from Pannonia aged 26, is commemorated by his heirs Valerius Antoninus and Aurelius Victorinus, at least one of whom was his *consobrinus*, with a long and

partly metrical epitaph (CIL VI 32808).

In a sample of 46 epitaphs of praetorians (CIL VI 32647-32714, using only those with an identifiable commemorator; each relationship counted once), the following commemorators are found:

wife	13
child	2
parent	4 (1 soldier)
brother	7 (5 soldiers)
freedman	5
<i>cognatus/consobrinus</i>	2 (2 soldiers)
fellow-soldier/heir/ <i>amicus</i>	13
self/by will	6

Commemorations by nuclear family only slightly outnumber those by extended family and non-kin. The nuclear family was less significant than among civilians at Rome (for whom 70 percent of commemorations were by nuclear family, 27 percent by extended family, 3 percent by non-kin, according to Saller and Shaw 1984: table 4), the extended family rather more important and non-kin vastly more important. Soldiers rarely had parents available to commemorate them; other relatives and more particularly non-relatives took their place.

Soldiers were bound together by the practice of making each other their heirs. No doubt in many cases the choice of heir was influenced by shared geographical or cultural background. An alternative support network was provided by people from the same locality (who may of course have been relatives too). The best evidence for this is provided by groups of Thracians serving in the Praetorian Guard in the third century, who joined together to make dedications, often to local gods, and recorded their home villages in their inscriptions (Noy 2000: 219–20; Ricci 2005: 83–8). For example, a dedication to Deus Sanctus Hero Briganitius by Flavius Proclianus of Cohort III, Claudius Mucianus of Cohort V, Aurelius Valerianus of Cohort V and Valerius Maximus of Cohort X (CIL VI 2807 = 32582). They describe themselves as *cives Usdicensis vico Agatapara*, that is from one village, perhaps in the territory of Hadrianopolis, which was called Uscudama in Thracian. Two praetorians from different cohorts (Iulius Iustus and Firmius Maternianus) from Veromandus in Belgica made two dedications (one dated 246 CE) to *diis sanctis patriensibus* (actually Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury, Diana, Hercules, Mars, Nemesis, Sol and Victoria) (CIL VI 32550–1). Coming together for religious activities may have been one aspect of a shared social life, or may have been the factor which kept fellow-villagers together. It transcended loyalty within the military unit, suggesting that the connections existed before coming to Rome.

Conclusion

Migration disrupted and altered families in many ways. Migrants themselves were likely to be predominantly men of marriageable age, and migration would at least have slowed down the formation of their own family. Soldiers moving to Rome would not usually be married before they went there. If they did decide to marry while they were serving there, their wives might well be women from their home areas and/or relatives of their fellow-soldiers. It was more likely that whole families would move to Delos together, but there are plenty of examples of people who arrived there unmarried, in which case they might marry someone from their homeland or someone whom they met (or whose family they met) on Delos, probably someone with whom they would never have come into contact in other circumstances.

Migrants could and did form nuclear families, but there were a number of reasons why other relationships were potentially more important to them than to people who stayed at home. Connections at the destination could encourage the migration in the first place: an elder brother serving in the Praetorian Guard at Rome; an uncle with a business on Delos. Relatives remained potentially useful afterwards: running other parts of an international business based on Delos, or helping a soldier to return home when he retired from the army. People whose relationships might not have been very significant at home were drawn together by the circumstances in which they found themselves: siblings, uncles, cousins and relatives by marriage.

On Delos it was normal for people to advertise their homeland in inscriptions and to pass their ethnic designation to their children; this tendency would no doubt have decreased over time, but the events of 88 BCE cut short any natural development. Soldiers at Rome also recorded where they came from, often down to a specific village. Many of them no doubt intended to return there, but for those who stayed at Rome it was apparently not usual to pass on their ethnic designation. For both groups, nominally religious associations of people from the same homeland played an important role, probably replacing family for those who did not have kin with them, but also surely including many relatives whose kinship is not apparent in the epigraphic evidence.

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Notes

- 1 E.g., in Saller and Shaw (1984) and the resulting literature. Parkin (1992: 135–6) acknowledges the importance of migration in ancient demography while lamenting the lack of quantifiable evidence.
- 2 Pearce (2010) discusses the use of burial practices and other archaeological evidence to identify migrants, but without inscriptions these can give little information about family relationships.
- 3 On this issue, see Huebner in this volume.
- 4 There is no space here to discuss in any detail the Italians on Delos; see Zalesskij (1982).
- 5 E.g., the establishment of the Berytians was destroyed (Zalesskij 1982: 38).
- 6 See Huebner in this volume.
- 7 On some servile work-groups, see Keegan in this volume.
- 8 If urban cohorts and *vigiles* (not normally provincials) are included, the total military population could be as much as 30,000 or more (Coulston 2000: 81). On quasi-familial relationships among the *vigiles*, see Keegan in this volume.
- 9 See Coulston (2000: 76–81) and Ricci (2005: 76–80) for details.
- 10 Phang (2002) and Allison (2011) discuss the evidence for soldiers' families before this date; see Noy (2011) for some other examples.

Bingham (2013) does not discuss praetorian family life.

Household Archaeology in Mediterranean Spain: *Family Forms from Iberia to Hispania*

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Introduction

Until recently in Spain knowledge of protohistoric communities since the nineteenth century had solely depended on the reliable interpretation of classical texts (Figure 8.1). However, these sources do not mention details of the systems of kinship, or the structure or the size of the family. Thus, Strabo left interesting observations on the towns of the northern peninsula, but he made no mention of marriage or family among the Iberians, who occupied the Mediterranean area.



Figure 8.1 Iron Age peoples of the Iberian Peninsula according to classical sources.

In spite of this limitation, the revision of ancient history from the mid-1970s has harnessed the development of a line of inquiry centered on the critical analysis of written sources (Bermejo 1978, 1982, 1983) and epigraphics (Albertos 1977; Pereira 1983; Beltrán 1988) as the basis of an interpretation of the social context of the Iron Age in the northwest. Comparisons of these social interpretations from archaeology began to be made during the 1980s. Until then the study of domestic space in archaeology had been carried out from the formalist and typological perspective of the history of art.

Interest in the study of microspace came about at that time as a result of the consolidation in Spain of approaches of spatial archaeology, settlement archaeology (Ucko *et al.* 1972) and household archaeology (Wilk and Rathje 1982), through the Teruel Colloquium of Spatial Archaeology and the work undertaken in various projects by the Prehistory Department of Complutense University (Fernández and Ruiz 1984). The Colloquium on Microspace held in Teruel in September 1986 clearly demonstrated the reinforcement process of a perspective that tried to achieve greater knowledge or understanding of the Iron Age societies of the Iberian Peninsula, starting with the analysis and interpretation of domestic units and the internal organization of the towns (Colloquium on Microspace 1986). In accordance with this standpoint, the organization of the habitat, the internal space of the town, the houses, and other architectonic structures would reflect the daily lives of their inhabitants; they would be, therefore, directly related to the patterns of familial and social life of those communities.

The study of the house and the organization of domestic space in the protohistory of the Iberian Peninsula has advanced remarkably during the last two decades, with the application of new methodologies and spatial analyses to the archaeological record. There can be no doubt that in this general context the most remarkable developments have taken place within the research framework of Mediterranean Iberian culture.¹ Therefore, while archaeological approaches to other chrono-cultural fields have continued to be reduced to typological systematizations, the study of Iberian architecture, on the other hand, has been oriented toward new lines of inquiry, incorporating models of microspatial analysis in the interpretation of domestic structures exhumed during excavations of fortified towns (Colloquium on Microspace 1986). The assumption of this perspective on the part of the main research groups that study the Iberian and Celtiberian world has allowed a good general characterization of its collective architecture (Maluquer *et al.* 1986; Abad 1991; Ruiz and Molinos 1993), and, more importantly, is making a considerable contribution to the definition of the habitational model, with its logical regional variants, produced by Iberian society (Pons *et al.* 1994). This line of investigation, in turn, has been enormously significant in the field of applied research, mainly in the Catalan and Levantine area, since it has served as a point of departure for the approach in recent years of projects concerned

with the revaluation of Iberian deposits.

Starting from this historiographical context, in the pages that follow we will approach an updated synthesis of the knowledge obtained from household archaeology on the family structure of the pre-Roman communities of the Spanish Mediterranean.

Domestic Architecture and Early Iron Age Societies

In the vast area of the mid-Duero the emergence between the end of the tenth century and the beginning of the ninth century BC of the settlements linked to the group known as the Soto de Medinilla represents a departure from previous models of domestic space (the so-called Cogotas culture). There was now a desire for permanence that broke with previous mobile and itinerant practices, as demonstrated by the wide stratigraphic sequences that have been recorded in deposits or in the remodeling of houses and homes. The new layout of the open settlements does not suggest a preoccupation with defense, although they do feature small adobe or rammed-earth walls, as well as fencing and fields of standing stones, mainly in the westernmost zone.

Domestic structures, which are dispersed within open and fortified villages alike, do not comply with previous approaches to urban planning (Romero *et al.* 2008: 660–4). What is noteworthy is the predominance of circular huts, built of adobe, which are connected to small rectangular storage structures, such as the one documented at level V of the Soto de Medinilla (Delibes *et al.* 1995; Ruiz Zapatero 2009: 235, fig. 9). The existing standardized and defined model of a circular house features elevations of rammed earth or adobe, prepared ground, the application of wall coatings, and the bench and hearth. The example of house XV at the Soto de Medinilla site is the most complex example of those documented until now (Delibes *et al.* 1995; Romero *et al.* 2008: 663, fig. 3).

An outstanding feature of the *soteña* house is the effort that was invested in the decoration of the walls, shown by the wall coverings and polychrome paintings with geometric motifs. A clear Mediterranean influence can be seen in these decorative schemes and also in imported products such as the fibula with bilateral spring (a type of brooch), painted ceramics, or early ironwork. Nevertheless the traditional circular shape was maintained, despite the contacts that gave rise to the arrival of new ideas, materials, and objects.

Like other elements of material culture, the house is a device of nonverbal communication that transmits information within the cultural code of the community. The homes themselves, the symbolic center of daily life, sometimes appear to have been decorated. This monumentalization of the

house coincided with an interesting process of ritualization which kept the newborn and animals underneath the flooring (Romero *et al.* 2008: 662–3). These rituals underline the nature of the hut as a metaphor for the reproduction of the family unit and its own identity. As G. Ruiz Zapatero (2009: 236) points out: the houses are, in some way, reservoirs of the traditional beliefs and values of the community.

This domestic architecture is a continuation of the traditional Late Bronze Age (Cogotas I) model, with huts of a circular layout, not exceeding 30 m², with a conical straw roof and an entrance preferably oriented toward the south-southeast. This noticeable continuity began to be broken in the transition toward the Late Iron Age, with the appearance, in the last phases of the settlement of the Corona/El Pasadero, of the first cobblestone or paved streets of clay that formed the structure of the domestic space, with the houses arranged around these roads; also, the occupation units consist of various rooms, delineated as a whole by means of a small enclosing fence (Romero *et al.* 2008: 664). See [Figure 8.2](#).

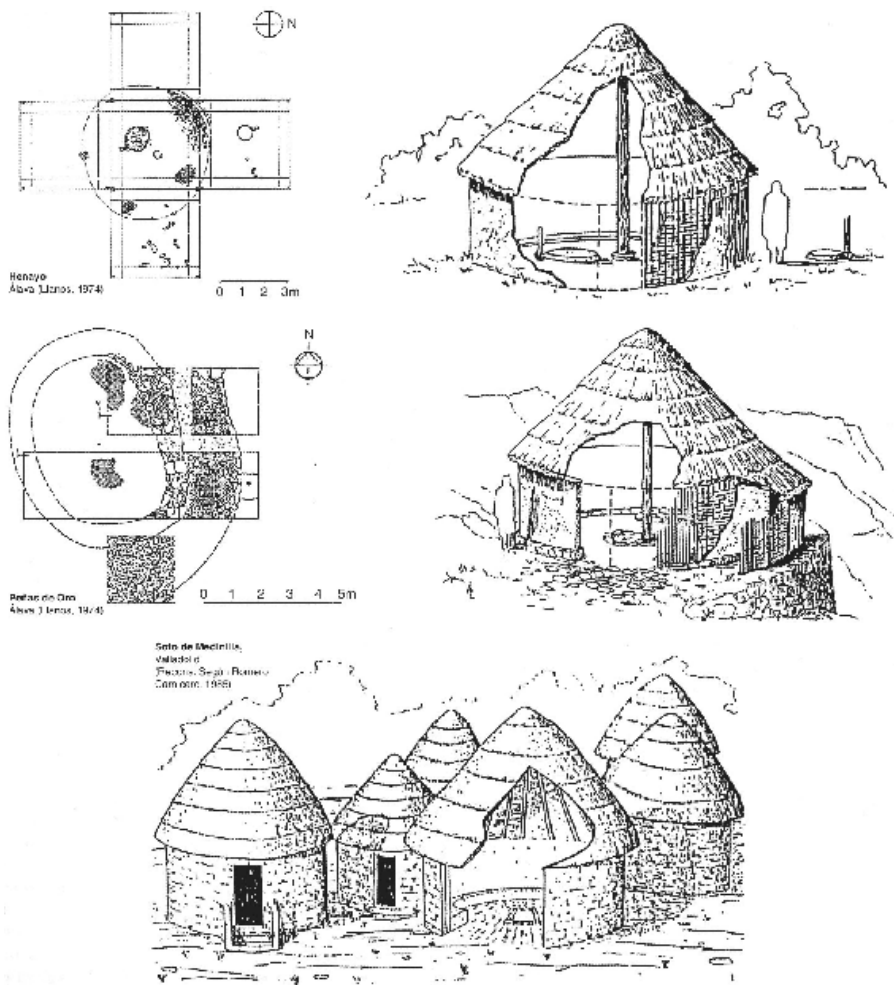


Figure 8.2 Hypothetical reconstruction of circular houses in the Duero and Ebro valleys (Jimeno 2009: 190, fig. 1).

With regard to the first Vetton hill forts of the western plains of the northern plateau, the houses, of quadrangular and rectangular layout, are detached and freely distributed without any apparent order, but are adapted to the orographic conditions: the valleys or depressions of the settlements determine the distribution of the houses (Álvarez-Sanchís 1999, 2003; Ruiz Zapatero 2009: 232, fig. 6). The isolation and internal dispersion of the town are characteristics that would endure a posteriori in the great hill forts of the area, such as the Raso de Candeleda (Fernández Gómez 2008), Ulaca, or La Mesa de Miranda (González-Tablas 2008).

In the Celtiberian area of the Alto Duero, the oldest levels of occupation of some emblematic settlements, such as El Castillo of Fuensauco or Cerro of Haya (Sanz *et al.* 1995), consist of domestic spaces formed by circular huts built from perishable materials and with a central hearth (Jimeno 2009: 193,

fig. 3). In Castro de Zarranzano a circular house was documented which was 6 m in diameter, with rubblework walls, a central hearth, and a southeastern access with a tiled exterior, adjoining an earlier rectangular cabin (Romero and Misiego 1992). In these first hill forts of the early Celtiberian period (from the seventh to the fifth centuries BC) the previous model of domestic space is reproduced, with patterns of spatial organization which, as in the case of the northwest, seem to indicate a predominance of family units in the community; the lack of internal partitioning of the domestic constructions, and the presence of multifunctional spaces, contrasts with the great size of the defenses: the material and spatial reference of the collective (Arenas 2007; Jimeno 2009: 207). Within this process, in the transition between the seventh and fourth centuries BC, are glimpses of the first changes that point toward the prevailing model in the Late Iron Age, with the gradual substitution of the circular huts by rectangular houses.

The same process is documented in the Castilian branch of the Iberian system: after a notable lack of settlements at the end of the second millennium BC, villages formed from modest groupings of huts built from timber posts and mud bricks began to appear (Arenas 1999). This settlement model was to undergo an abrupt transformation at the beginning of the seventh century BC with the appearance of fortified towns equipped with solid stone structures, delimited by walls and ditches set out in a dual pattern alternating between high fortified settlements and low open valley settlements (Arenas 2009: 213). A process of territorialization of the local communities emerged, focused on the land and seizing economic and symbolic control of the territory. The monumentalization of the towns would reflect a remarkable individualization of communal space: the weight of the community was materialized in the first settlements (seventh to the sixth centuries BC), as in phase I of Ceremeño, by the spatial predominance of communal space around which, on the periphery, domestic constructions were located (Cerdeño and Juez 2002; Arenas 2007: 219). The great transformation of this pattern is found, once again, in the fifth to the fourth centuries BC, with the increasing complexity of domestic space.

As regards the central zone of the plateau, ascribable to the Carpetan area, the development of large projects to control archaeological impact has started to shape an interesting reality in Iron I (Ruiz Zapatero 2009: 237–8). The panorama reveals a remarkable architectonic polymorphism in which, on the one hand, the continuation of huts with large storage cavities, following the earlier tradition, is evident; on the other hand, constructive innovations like the hut of *Ecce Homo* or the first rectangular houses with stone socles are documented (Puente Largo del Jarama). At the same time appear large huts supported by posts with floor plans of enormous dimensions, some of which reached 200 m² in surface area (Dávila 2007; Urbina *et al.* 2007).

Returning to the Atlantic coast and focusing upon the southwestern peninsula, the emergence of the fortified landscape coincided with contact between

Atlantic and Mediterranean that would mark the evolution of an architecture inspired by both the tradition of the high-altitude settlements of the northwest, with its circular huts, and the spatial organizational patterns of the south. In the Early Iron Age a change of architectonic style can be discerned, with the spread of the rectangular shape, the systematic fortification of the settlements, the increasingly uniform model of spatial organization within the settlements, and the appearance of an architecture of prestige and a new scenography of clear Phoenician influence, such as the enclosure of Fernão Vaz (Ourique, Beja) (Correia 2009: 272–3).

In the case of the inner areas of the Alentejo, which are farther from the roads by which contact with the Mediterranean colonists was made, an intense process of ruralization of the population occurred, with small dispersed rural settlements, during the first half of the first millennium BCE. Excavations of Late Bronze Age sites, dating from between the tenth and the eighth centuries BC (such as Rocha do Vigío), echo the southwestern tradition, with domestic spaces articulated from huts of a round or oval layout (Mataloto 2009: 282–4, fig. 2). Domestic architecture built from perishable materials and circular ash remains known as “hut floors” continued to characterize broad zones of the interior. However, under the influence of contact with the Phoenicians, this model of spatial organization began to alter, giving rise to the spread of the rectangular shape and generating dynamics of privatization of the interior of the new constructions. Settlements such as Espinhaço de Cão constitute the clearest example in the Alto Alentejo territory of the profound extent of the implementation and integration of the basic concepts of Mediterranean architecture in rural areas, spread in the context of interaction with the Phoenician colonial world (Mataloto 2009: 287). Other small rural settlements such as Herdade da Sapatoa (Mataloto 2004) adopted the characteristic shapes and new construction techniques on a small scale, maintaining a pattern of use of traditional family domestic space, with multifunctional spaces and constructions of small dimensions, throughout Iron I. Only from the fifth century BC was a process of population concentration consolidated within the fortified towns of the Alto Alentejo (Mataloto 2009: 282).

In the Levantine area we have an interesting sequence that shows the passing of the traditional domestic architecture of the Bronze Age and the emergence of the typical Iberian model of urban planning. Between the beginning of the first millennium BC and the end of the seventh century, throughout the phase known as the pre-Iberian, various forms of habitation have been documented, including caves, huts, and isolated groupings of houses, as well as the first agglomerations of arranged houses following pre-urban models (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 94–8). The old occupation levels of some settlements are characterized by the presence of huts of an oval, circular, and sometimes pseudo-rectangular (with curved corners) layout, dispersed around the interior of the settlement, isolated from one another, and lacking dividing walls. These houses,

constructed from perishable materials, consist of a single space that rarely exceeds 20 m², all of which seems to respond to the same architectonic model, with no variation in status size or organization of the internal space (Martín 1998; Belarte *et al.* 2009: 95, fig. 2).

Emerging alongside these pre-urban towns are settlements which anticipate the typical Iberian urban model, as early as the Late Bronze Age, such as the well-known site of Genó. The urban framework is formed by houses of rectangular, square, or sometimes trapezoidal layout, with groupings of houses and defined and delimited circulation spaces. This type of settlement began to proliferate from the seventh century BC in the Catalan area (Figure 8.3), by which time it had already appeared in Puente Tablas (Jaén), superseding the huts of the Late Bronze Age; at this time the traditional circular house was replaced by rectangular ones. This change involved the internal subdivision of space and allowed artisanal and domestic duties to be carried out under the same roof; in the previous phase these had been divided between the great circular or subcircular huts and the floors of circular huts (Ruiz and Molinos 2007: 140). The rigidity of the model and the architectonic isomorphism indicate communities with a domestic means of production, no social hierarchization, family units of production and consumption, and the predominance of values of community cooperation (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 96). From the second half of the seventh century BC a certain economic specialization can be observed in some settlements, related to trade with the Phoenician world.



Figure 8.3 Aerial view of the Iberian settlement of Els Vilars (Arbeca, Garrigues, Catalonia).

(Photo by Jordi Lomas).

These proto-urban settlements of the Early Iron Age would lay the foundations of the architectonic style of the subsequent period and define the basic model of the Iberian house: structures of rectangular or trapezoidal layout, with walls of stone and earth, spread throughout the interior of the settlement, with shared dividing walls and alternating with circulation spaces.

Domestic Architecture and Late Iron Age Societies

The means of domestic production characteristic of leaderless tribal societies of the Early Iron Age gave way to a new reality in the transition toward Iron II, in other Mediterranean areas of the Iberian Peninsula and of Europe. For example, from the sixth to the fifth centuries BC in the eastern Mediterranean and the south of France, local communities paved the way toward social segmentation with the supremacy of certain lineages that mobilized patronage, managed and redistributed surpluses, and controlled trade with merchants and Mediterranean settlers (Isoardi 2009: 73). Also, these leaders legitimized their position through the practice of a heroic philosophy that sublimated the warrior character of these elites (González García 2006: 34, 2009: 64). Demographic pressure and colonial contacts prioritized from the fourth century BC the concentration of the population in proto-urban agglomerations, the direct antecedent of the oppida, from which the influence of Greco-Italian domestic architectonic models (Isoardi 2009: 75) and the presence of specialized craft areas (Girard 2009) emerged.

In the Mediterranean Iberian area archaeological research reveals a similar process to that experienced in the northwest: throughout the fourth and especially the fifth centuries BC a significant increase in the number of settlements occurred, with the creation of numerous nuclei of settlements dispersed or connected with specialized economic activities (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 93). The pre-urban models of isolated huts of the Early Iron Age disappeared and upon these foundations a new pattern of the organization of domestic space became widespread, the model of a settlement with a central street. Originating in the mid-Ebro valley during the seventh century BC (the sites of Genó, Cabezo de Monleón, Zaforas, and Loma de los Brunos), this stretched in the Early Iron Age toward the mouth of the Ebro with settlements such as Puig del Roget or Moleta del Remei (Burillo Mozota 2009: 183). During the mid-Iberian period there was a greater degree of monumentalization of these fortified towns, including the reinforcement of the walls and the placement of a bunker in one of the sides, close to the entrance.

At this time a type of dwelling of rectangular layout with walls built generally from adobe was increasingly common, in which there was a collective space with a fireplace for cooking and maintenance tasks, and another room (located at the back, away from the areas of transit) used for storage, with an

abundance of ceramic vases and pots. The most complex constructions may also feature areas in which some kind of specific artisanal activity was carried out, as well as rooms of a cultural character associated with domestic rituals and banquets (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 98–9).

In the mid-Iberian period a clear standardization of the house model took place: a process of complexification of the domestic space and a territorialization of communities, with clear hierarchical structuring of the settlements (Sanmartí and Santacana 1994; Belarte 1997, 2009; Grau 2002; Sala 2005; Bonet *et al.* 2007; Asensio *et al.* 2009; Mata *et al.* 2009). In the better-studied territories, this hierarchy reflects similar situations, identifying great nuclei of the first order, or cities; nuclei of the second order, or minor towns and villages; small fortified nuclei; settlements of specialized function; and small farms or nuclei of rural settlements (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 99). This hierarchy is documented within the settlements themselves, by the houses and residential districts of the Iberian aristocratic elites as well as the humbler and more discreet households of farmers and craftsmen (Figure 8.4).



Figure 8.4 Iberian settlement of Calafell (Alorda Park, Catalonia): in the northwest corner we can see the aristocratic house (Didpatri).

The complex houses reveal greater internal compartmentalization, larger dimensions, and architectonic care. They also feature prestige elements (column bases, *signinum* paving, wall coverings) and display imported goods. The construction of such residences frequently necessitated the appropriation of collective spaces and structures, entailing the privatization of access to the

defensive system or the occupation of public routes of circulation. This dynamic not only reveals a desire for socio-spatial differentiation but implies an acceptance of such differentiation on the part of the community (Belarte *et al.* 2009: 119).

As in the case of the northwest, this material reality was connected to increases in agrarian productivity and technological development (here from the sixth century BC), processes that generated an increase in surpluses and production systems that would be controlled by aristocratic elites, by particular lineages that segregated the community.²

The same model was repeated during the mid-Iberian phase in the Celtiberian area of the Alto Duero (Jimeno 2009: 195–8, fig. 5) and in the mid-Ebro valley, where settlements with a central street have a long historical development; paradigmatic sites such as Los Castellares of Herrera de los Navarros demonstrate the effectiveness of this settlement model and the continuity of a social structure ingrained in the time and the territory (Burillo Mozota and Sus Giménez 1986; Burillo Mozota and Ortega 1999; Ortega 1999, 2006; Burillo Mozota 2009). Nevertheless, the prevailing social model stemmed from a more egalitarian tradition, dating from the Late Bronze Age until its disappearance in the late Iberian period, when the social hierarchy materialized definitively. In the Celtiberian state structure, extended and nuclear family groups would still retain their validity as references of identity for individuals, at least in the mid-Ebro valley. Towns such as Los Castellares conformed to a previous architectonic plan, according to which the construction of the settlement commenced with the erection of the wall; a posteriori the internal space was distributed in equal parts and the dividing walls of the houses rose, the only ones that featured rubblework socles. Each family had about 52 m² which could be divided according to their own criteria (Burillo Mozota 2009: 104–5, figs. 22–4). Unlike other areas of the peninsula, the population increase was not resolved by the extension of the enclosures of the fortified towns, but by means of processes of division and integration that gave rise to settlements of a new layout (Burillo Mozota and Ortega 1999: 130; Ortega 1999, 2005). The community established in these new hill forts maintained its kinship relations with the home community, based on the formation of groups by patrilineal bloodline.

From the fourth century BC the interior space distribution of the hill forts of the Alto Duero closely followed this same model, with a high standardization of these spaces of equal area. There gradually came about greater internal compartmentalization and a homogenization of urban modules, which entailed a greater regularization of public and private spaces, with the hearth arranged in the central zone and long benches in various locations. The trifunctional model of the Celtiberian peasant house, having rectangular layout, triple compartmentalization, and a cellar and/or silo, was now consolidated in the fourth to third century BC (Jimeno 2009, 207). This domestic architecture

stemmed from processes of economic diversification and agrarian intensification, as well as from the foundation of new settlements connected with productive agricultural zones at the expense of traditional livestock practices (Arenas 2007).

On the eastern plateau there is a good example of the changes that occurred over the long duration of the Celtiberian organizational model of domestic space. I refer to Ceremeño de Herrería (Cerdeño and Juez 2002): see [Figure 8.5](#). In its first stage of occupation, a central space predominated, free of construction and for public use, and which was surrounded by private and semi-private spaces intended to fulfil the residential and productive requirements of the community. It was organized in a radial fashion with entrances opening toward the aforementioned nuclear space (Arenas 2009: 217, fig. 4). By contrast, the second phase involved the privatization of public space and a linear urban approach in which the entrances of the houses now opened onto straight streets. In addition, there is a notable waterproofing of the domestic units, a marked control of the circulatory routes, and a reduction in the visual relation between constructions. On the town level the monumentalization of the defensive enclosure was part of a strategy of conspicuous consumption, with the aim of strengthening the position of specific groups within the community (Arenas 2009: 218–19). The emergence may therefore be observed of a process of social division that broke with the egalitarian model dominant in Iron I, in which towns such as El Ceremeño 1 were designed to cover all the community's subsistence requirements, from the construction of living spaces to handicrafts and communal acts.

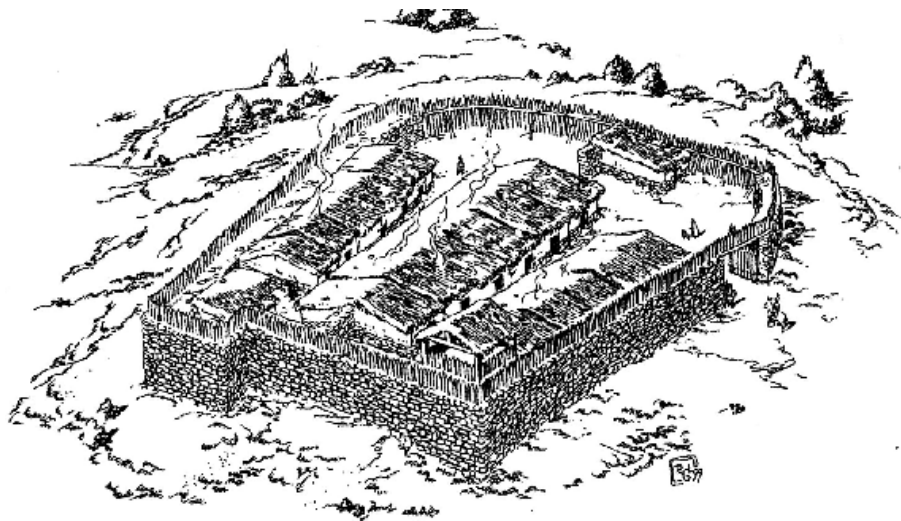


Figure 8.5 The Celtiberian settlement of El Ceremeño.

(Cerdeño and Juez 2002: fig. 54)

On the northern plateau, in the Vetton area during Iron II, the rectangular

layout became widespread and a model of an internally partitioned modular house was established which is considered to show a clear orientalizing influence (Fernández Gómez 2008: 192–3; Ruiz Zapatero 2009: 233). At later stages great agglomerations that reproduced the Celtiberian pattern appeared, such as Raso de Candeleda (Fernández Gómez 1986, 1991) or Mesa de Miranda; in the latter settlement a great aristocratic house patio has been excavated (González-Tablas 2008: fig. 5; Ruiz Zapatero 2009: 234, fig. 8) that again seems to reproduce the orientalizing prestige architecture of Extremadura and the southwestern peninsula. This is represented in the house model that features modules around a central space, as in the well-known case of the palace-sanctuary of Cancho Ruano.

From the fourth century BC the Vaccean and Carpetan cultural landscape of the plateau was increasingly defined as the confluence of several processes: the configuration of great settlements, the adoption of houses of a rectangular layout, the intensification of cereal-based agriculture, the spread of iron instruments, the appearance of wheel-thrown pottery, and the introduction of incineration rituals (Romero *et al.* 1993, 2008; Sanz *et al.* 2009). The domestic architecture repeated the tripartite modular models already associated with the Celtiberian and Iberian areas, with a remarkable compartmentalization and internal complexity, including kitchen, storage, milling, and banqueting areas (Morín *et al.* 2003; Baquedano *et al.* 2007; Ruiz Zapatero 2009: 237, fig. 193, 2007; Sanz *et al.* 2009: 256, fig. 2, 263, fig. 6).

House, Family and Community: The Path Toward Social Division

The birth of sedentary and stable towns during the Early Iron Age in the Iberian Peninsula constitutes a radical innovation that modifies the model of implementation of communities existing in the territory during the Bronze Age. The social context in which the hill forts emerged seems to be characterized by fixation of groups to the land, by a process of territorialization defined by the sedentarization of the housing areas. In this sense, during the Early Iron Age a caesura in the process conducive to the establishment of a divided society seems to have taken place; the means of acquisition and display of power entered a crisis in this period, with community preponderant over leaders. In spite of the regional variation that we have found, the domestic world reproduces the same evolutionary model. Therefore, in the Celtiberian as in the Iberian area, during the Early Iron Age a household is documented in which tradition defines the formal housing model, generating models of spatial organization distinguished by a remarkable isomorphism of domestic spaces linked to family units. The egalitarian social logic of the domestic mode of production brought about a

democratization of technology, a homogenization of material culture, and a generalization of technical-operational chains. There are no notable differences between the huts, all of which display similar household items typical of the settlements of recent prehistory. Each family group seems to have managed its subsistence. Open-field excavated settlements indicate the predominance of houses of a similar layout and surface area. With some exceptions, the dimensions of the houses suggest that they were occupied by a small number of people, such as a nuclear family.

In the second Iron Age a process of monumentalization of the house is documented that reached its greatest levels in the Mediterranean coastal area during the period known as the mid-Iberian. Archaeologically a noticeable inequality between settlements can be detected: the inequality between family units and differential access to autochthonous and allochthonous resources. There was now the development of complex, compartmentalized housing with hyper-specialized homes that corresponded to hierarchical communities, authentic chiefdoms with dependent communities and a patronage system. These new materialities seem to reveal a deep social transformation with certain extensive domestic groups playing a significant role. It is here that we find the local elites that would be the protagonists in the process of Romanization which unfolded from the second century BC when Iberia became Hispania, with the gradual onset of new civic models of individual, family, and community.

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Notes

- 1 This is the main reason that we will focus our attention on the Mediterranean region of Spain as the subject matter of this volume. For more on the research into family, house, and community in the so-called Celtic world of the Spanish Atlantic coast, see González Ruibal 2006, Ayán Vila 2008, and Parcero Oubiña *et al.* 2011.
- 2 Hierarchic and completely settled patterns with clear regional site specialization correspond to social formations known as chiefdoms as well as states, that is, to communities which anthropologists generally refer to as regional polities, communities where settlements are subjected to the control of a production-dominating elite. In these societies the family plays a fundamental role, as an important part of production is developed in the household and family environment. The Iberian house, where many productive activities took place, would seem to reflect this situation. In its context, great complex houses would be the residences of the members of these production-controlling elites (Belarte *et al.* 2009, 118).

Egypt as Part of the Mediterranean? Domestic Space and Household Structures in Roman Egypt

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The Mediterranean Identity of Egypt

Egypt, the land of the Nile, is located in the African continent, sharing borders with Sudan and Libya. Egypt is also regarded as the gateway from Africa to the Near and Middle East, via the Red Sea to Saudi Arabia, and via the land bridge to Israel. Furthermore, Egyptian Alexandria is also one of the biggest and most important Mediterranean ports, facilitating trade exchange with the entire Mediterranean from Syria to Spain. Finally, with its flora and fauna, Egypt belongs to four different geographical spheres: the African Sudano-Zambesian, the Asiatic Irano-Turanian, the Afro-Asiatic Saharo-Sindian, and the Mediterranean regions. However, the cultural identity of Egypt is more than a matter of geographical location. While today the Arab element among the population is certainly dominant – Egyptians speak Arabic as a native language – a large majority of the population is Muslim, and few Egyptians would consider themselves Mediterranean or even African, things differed in antiquity. From the rule of Nubian invaders south of the first Nile cataracts in the eighth century BCE, through the Assyrians' conquest of Egypt in 672 BCE, through the invasions by the Persians in the second half of the fifth century and Mediterranean powers such as the Macedonians in the third century BCE and the Romans in the first century BCE, Egypt was continuously exposed to foreign social, religious, and cultural influences, politically dominated by African, Asian, or Mediterranean rulers. Ethnic intermixing occurred especially with Greeks settling in Egypt as mercenaries in the Archaic Period and above all as veterans in the Hellenistic Period under the Ptolemies. By contrast to the Persians or Romans living in Egypt, the Greeks integrated themselves deeply into Egyptian society and culture to the degree that in the Roman period it was basically impossible to distinguish anymore between Greek or Egyptian elements among the population outside Alexandria. Egypt adopted the Imperial Roman ruler cult as well as Christianity and eventually Islam, and entertained heavily frequented trade interactions with all countries of the Mediterranean as well the Near East,

Arabia, and India, and thus has been in constant contact for the past 4,000 years.

In a short paper Roger Bagnall has brought attention to the often neglected peculiar position of Greco-Roman Egypt within Mediterranean antiquity and its lack of unifying characteristics proposed by Horden and Purcell for the Mediterranean. Thanks to the Nile, Egypt lacks above all the degree of fragmentation and difficult accessibility of the coastal hinterland that according to Horden and Purcell is so typical of Greece and its Mediterranean neighbors (Horden and Purcell 2000; Bagnall 2005; see also Burstein 2002).

When discussing Egypt as part of the Mediterranean, Near East, or Africa, the focus tends to lie on its geography, trade and warfare with other regions, agricultural prowess, forms of administration, documentation practices, law, language, and literacy. However, one important aspect that has been neglected so far is that of family and domestic organization. I recently advanced a comparative approach to the family in Roman Egypt studying the factors affecting the character and composition of the household, such as inheritance customs and practice, marriage patterns and postmarital residence, the occupation of the household head, and labor force requirements, and comparing them with other premodern patriarchal societies such as premodern Southeast Asia (Huebner 2013a). I have also studied cultural practices such as female circumcision that have probably taken place regularly in Egypt from Pharaonic to modern times and that clearly belong to the African rather than the Mediterranean or Near Eastern cultural sphere (Huebner 2009; see Huebner 2010 for household structure; Huebner 2013b for adoption practice and Huebner 2014 for inheritance patterns).

Moreover, governmental programs and academic studies have always tried to argue for either the more Mediterranean, Asian, or African identity of Egypt each according to their own political agenda and scholarly background. Studies that stress the characteristics indigenous to Egypt are much rarer. When studying household and family forms in Roman Egypt, however, studies on earlier and later periods of Egypt also allowed me to study these aspects of a society's organization as a continuum and not in their usual isolation, thus enabling me to see the developments and broader pictures of Egyptian households and family structures.¹ We recognize the changes in domestic organization, family size, and economic activities of the household that occurred from Pharaonic through Ptolemaic through Roman times, but also similarities between Roman Egyptian household forms, for which we have better information than for the entire ancient world, and household forms in nineteenth-century Egypt.

When analyzing these Roman Egyptian census data based on registrations of individual households for information about family formation, there is a natural tendency to overemphasize the household and its boundaries with regard to all other social relations that existed in this society. The co-residing

household members are at the center of enquiry; their relations to other members of their family, next-door neighbors, or other community members with whom close relations were entertained fade into the background simply because we have much less information about such interactions, not because they were less important or less frequent. In reality household boundaries were certainly much more fluid and less easily distinguishable than they appear when we just consider the evidence of the census. While the so-called Cambridge household classification system, promoted by its founders Laslett and Wall, is still widely used today, results from other approaches to the social landscape must be given wider room (Laslett, and Wall 1972; cf. Wall, Robin, and Laslett 1983). These approaches take more qualitative data into account and set the co-residential group in its wider web of the larger family, kinship, and community structures (Kertzer 1984; Netting, Wilk, and Arnould 1984; Plakans 1984).

The analysis of census returns of Roman Egypt according to the Cambridge household classification system shows that the most common household type was the simple family household with a proportion of 43 percent of all households; 15 percent were extended households, usually a couple with their children and an elderly parent of the husband, while 21 percent of all households belonged to the multiple-family type. However, as multiple-family households regularly contained more members than simple ones, most individuals lived in multiple-family households. Considerable differences existed between urban and rural areas of Roman Egypt regarding predominant household forms. Living in an urban environment seems to have led to an increase in nuclear families, while in rural environments multiple-family households were more common, a pattern that we find in many traditional patriarchal societies. While families of artisans and shopkeepers in the towns of Roman Egypt were more likely to live in simple family households, the marital union building the basis of the family's economic activity, peasant farmers lived in larger households in order to maintain a sufficient domestic workforce and to avoid excessive fragmentation of the paternal land. The census data from nineteenth-century Egypt studied by Kenneth Cuno exhibit striking similarities with regard to form and method of registering the population, quality of surviving returns, and also recorded household composition with census returns from Roman Egypt (Cuno 1995; 2005, 105–17; Cuno, and Reimer 1997).

Comparing the descriptions of Middle and Upper Egyptian domestic life by early twentieth-century visitors with excavation reports from houses of the Greco-Roman period leads likewise to remarkable similarities:

Passing through one of the narrow alleys, after penetrating into the confused closed facades of grey adobe, the houses standing wall to wall. ... The quarter is old, and the village older still, but the houses will be comparatively new. The materials and methods of construction make the

building impermanent. ... The walls have few openings, partly to ensure further stability, and partly to protect the interior from glare and heat during the day and from the cold and dangers of the night. Each house contains a large family, including very often, besides the father and mother, four or five children, a grandmother or grandfather, who have great authority, a married son or two, and some relatives on a long stay.

This is the picture of an Egyptian village we gain from the archaeological excavations of domestic space and the papyrological evidence from Middle Egyptian villages of Roman times. If Pausanias, the Greek traveler, had come to Egypt in the second century CE, gone up the Nile, and visited one of the peasant villages in the Nile valley or the Fayum that are so well documented in our papyrological record, this is probably what he would have seen. The author of the account of the enduring life of the Egyptian peasant above, however, is not Pausanias, but Henry Habib Ayrout writing in 1930s Egypt (Ayrout 2005: 115–118). Ayrout was an Egyptian Jesuit and sociologist trained in France, whose doctoral dissertation “*Moers et coutumes des fellahs*” (“The Egyptian peasant”) was first published in 1938.

However, it must be stressed that we can speak of only similarities not continuities. We have to be acutely aware that we cannot take the image of eternal Egyptian village life that has not changed over the past 6,000 years that Ayrout draws at face value. His and other peasant studies written in the 1930s and 1940s contributed to a political agenda in the times of rural uprisings and spreading rebellions against colonial powers between the two world wars (Mitchell 2002: 124). Ayrout, who grew up in an elite family in Cairo, had never seen the Upper Egyptian villages he described (Mitchell 2002, 146). He wrote this romanticized description of the Egyptian fellah’s life as his doctoral dissertation in France, influenced by the cultural assumptions of the Western world, justifying elite intervention to instruct and better the fellah who, according to Ayrout, was stuck in his deficient timeless peasant mentality. We find the same Eurocentric prejudices also in the writings of the Western travelers of the nineteenth and early twentieth century visiting rural Egypt (Said 1978). We therefore have to take their descriptions of the simple mud houses of the Egyptian peasant population with a grain of salt (Goldschmidt, Johnson, and Salmoni 2005; Selim 2004). But these reports do add some flesh to the bare bones of information about Egypt in Roman times we get from the excavation reports, the statistics drawn from the census returns, and the snapshots from the letters, sales contracts, or petitions that mention in one way or another the architecture of houses, household composition, living conditions, and the use of domestic space. They help us imagine how the ancient people actually used the rooms of their house, how village life evolved, and how a neighborhood was shaped by its individual residents, bridging the gap left between the material and textual evidence.

The Climate and the House

Even if the political and religious landscape, the living conditions, and mentality have changed, the environment and climate have not: houses in Egypt – now and then – had and have to protect their owners from sandstorms, burning heat, and strong winds, while further north a house has to withstand above all rain and cold. Archaeological excavations of houses from the Ptolemaic and Roman period have shown that this form of house construction can be traced back in the region for at least 3,000 years. Egyptian peasant farmers lived (as they do now) in tightly packed residential structures, not on isolated farmsteads or hamlets. The compact villages were built densely, and houses had several floor levels in order to take as little as possible of the fertile land for farming. The high, narrow houses were tightly nestled together; they did not share walls but were built right next to each other.

Because of the scarcity of material and accessible documentation, few studies have been concerned with the domestic architecture of Roman Middle and Upper Egypt (Luckhard 1914; Nowicka 1969; Husson 1983; Maehler 1983; van Minnen 1994; Alston 1997; 2002; Davoli 1998. For a detailed overview of the literature on Greco-Roman houses in Egypt, see Depraetere 2005: 36–8). Their crumbled mud bricks, rich in silt from the Nile, in Arabic called *sebakh*, have always been highly valued as fertilizer by Egyptian peasants. Before Western archaeologists arrived at the end of the nineteenth century to conduct scientific excavations on site, *sebakh* diggers had already demolished many ancient settlements in the Fayum and along the Nile. Papyrus hunters in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did the rest. Only interested in excavating as many papyri as possible, they paid little attention to archaeological context, and mud-brick walls were carelessly destroyed in their quest. Modern building sites over the remains of Greco-Roman settlements and, last but not least, environmental forces have allowed little of the fragile mud-brick architecture from two millennia ago to survive to the present (see Depraetere 2005: 16–35 for a detailed discussion of the destruction caused by the *sebakhin* and the papyrus hunters).

Therefore, few systematic and extensive excavations of Roman houses in Egypt have been conducted. Even fewer excavation reports of private houses, and especially of the rather modest ones that interest us, have been published (cf. Depraetere 2005: 27–33). Thanks to more diligent excavations and their publication we know most about the private houses of Greco-Roman Karanis in the Fayum oasis excavated by a team from Michigan University (Boak, and Peterson 1931; Husselman 1979). Here excavators found houses built on top of each other due to rising street levels. Accumulating sand and debris, but

also erosion over time, meant that every few decades lower floors of houses were abandoned and another floor level was added at the top. Different periods of building activities are easily distinguishable because during each period – Ptolemaic, Early Roman, and later Roman – the mud bricks used had different dimensions and a different composition, with more or less straw mixed in, which gave them also a slightly different color, ranging from dark grey to yellow-brown to light grey. What Karanis in the Fayum is for the Roman period, Djeme in Upper Egypt is for Byzantine times: there diligent excavations have brought to light the well-preserved structures of houses from the early Byzantine period.

In each period the peasants of Middle and Upper Egypt probably built their houses single-handedly from dried mud brick, an inexpensive but not very durable material made from mud left behind by the Nile from its annual flooding. The mud was mixed with straw, placed in a mold, and then left on the ground to dry in the sun. This procedure, still used to this day to produce bricks, is described in the Old Testament (Exodus 5:6–7): “That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and overseers in charge of the people: ‘You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw.’” Straw was an important ingredient as it increased the consistency of the bricks. The foundation of the houses was often built from stones or burned bricks to prevent humidity from creeping up from the ground. Little had changed when Ayrout (2005: 118) described housebuilding in the early twentieth century: “To be strong enough a wall so constructed must be from twelve to eighteen inches thick. A fellah with money to spare will build on a foundation of kiln-baked bricks or lime-stone rubble. This keeps out the dampness which creeps up from the soil and undermines the walls.”

Mud-brick houses have, however, a much shorter life span than we may be used to today especially from our solid pre-war stone houses that could easily last another 100 years. Van Minnen takes two to three generations as the maximum durability of a mud-brick house in Roman Egypt (Van Minnen 1994: 231). Then the crumbling structure needed to be leveled and another house of mud brick was built on top of the remaining ground structure.² As stone and wood have always been scarce in Egypt, these building materials were used sparingly in building private houses. Wood was found for windows and doors, for door hinges, and as reinforcement for walls. Stone instead of raw mud brick was used to reinforce foundation walls, corners, thresholds, architraves, and outside stairs.³ Lower rooms had vaulted ceilings; the last floor usually had a flat roof with a roof terrace on top.

However, simple mud-brick houses were well designed for the local climate. The small houses with their thick walls and small windows high up that efficiently prevented the heat, wind, and sand from entering the living area provided a cool place during the day and protection against robbers and the

cold at night. Also the outer walls of the courtyard must have provided shade for the women who ground flour there, baked bread in the outside oven, or cooked a meal. After the sun had set the family could enjoy a cool breeze on the roof terrace, a preferred sleeping place during the hottest months of the year. A petitioner in Ptolemaic Soknopaiou Nesos reports that a wall of a neighbor's house collapsed onto his roof terrace where his wife and daughter were sleeping: "My wife and my daughter were asleep on the roof of her house when the wall of Psenatymis, weaver, fell upon them and ... my wife who is pregnant is in danger of her life and as a result of this it happened that a robe worth 1 bronze talent and a woman's sleeved tunic worth 4,000 drachmai and the other furniture in the house were destroyed" (*P.Mich.*

15.688 from the second/first century BCE; APIS translation). The mud brick falling on the petitioner's roof terrace apparently also made the entire roof collapse so that the furniture and clothes on the ground floor suffered damage.

Depraetere has made a remarkable study of the house types of Greco-Roman Egypt; the results of his unpublished dissertation deserve to be known much more widely (Depraetere 2005). He investigated 284 ground plans from all over Egypt. Most houses date to the Early Roman period. Very few houses of the Ptolemaic period survive, because they were built on in the Roman period. Likewise, we have few new constructions of houses for the later Roman period because older houses continued to be used and/or their structures were adapted to the needs of their new owners. Houses of the most recent settlement phase were also the first to be demolished by the *sebakh* diggers. Depraetere states that the majority of houses in Karanis covered an area of about 50 m² (cf. average house sizes in Bronze Age Crete in Day's chapter). These medium-sized houses were most frequently found in the center of Karanis. Small houses of about 30 m² or so tended to be found at the edges of the town. Depraetere also stresses that small dwellings were not necessarily occupied by poor people. House sizes therefore seem to have correlated with family size rather than wealth.

Davoli in her study *L'archeologia urbana nel Fayyum di età ellenistica e romana* (1998) gives a summary of the excavation reports for Roman Fayum towns. She concludes that the architecture of private house types changed little over the 600 years from the third century BCE to the third century CE – a rectangular, sometimes square layout of a house consisting usually of two floors. The lower room as well as the staircase had a vaulted ceiling. The stairs to the upper floor(s) and eventually to the roof terrace were usually located in the center or to the side of the house. None of the houses contained a kitchen with provisions for cooking – in contrast to houses from the classical period in Greece (Jameson 1990: 98). The preparing of meals in Egyptian houses took place in the open courtyard where often several ovens, hearths, mills, and other household items have been found (Davoli 1998: 53).

Depraetere tried to trace the origins of the Egyptian town house of Roman

times, aiming to reveal their indigenous Egyptian, Greco-Egyptian, or rather Romano-Egyptian character. He concludes that at least the modest houses of the Roman Fayum and Nile valley do not display any obvious similarities with houses of either Greek or Roman tradition. Their distinct layout seems to have been indigenous. Not so, however, the houses that were inhabited by the local elite. They are easily distinguishable from the modest town houses described above. They covered a much larger area, had an *aithrion* or peristyle courtyard, and exhibited decorative elements of expensive wood and stone. The model for these houses dating from the Early Roman period to the sixth century was, however, not the Roman villa but the classic Aegean peristyle house. It has often been remarked of the people of the Roman Fayum and the Nile valley (Clarysse 1992: 51–6; Bagnall 1997: 20; Depraetere 2005: 166–7) that they considered themselves Greco-Egyptian in character rather than Greek or Egyptian or Romano-Egyptian (Depraetere 2005: 167). The same can be said of the character of their houses. Depraetere noticed also that the further inland from the Mediterranean and up the Nile, the less Greek and the more indigenous in style the houses became.

Evidence in the Papyri

In the following this chapter tries by an interdisciplinary approach to link the archaeological evidence with the content of the papyri originating from the same context and time span. We find indeed all of the architectural elements mentioned in the excavation reports also in the papyrological evidence (Husson 1983). Descriptions of houses in sales or lease contracts specify the adjoining properties on all four sides: these were usually other houses, a courtyard, and the street, and rarely an open piece of land. In the sales contracts of houses, we find houses ranging from 5 to 75 m² having between one and seven floors (Maehler 1983: 120). Diodorus Siculus (1.45.5) mentions houses in Thebes with even four and five floors (τὰς τῶν ἰδιωτῶν οἰκίας, ἃς μὲν τετρωρόφους, ἃς δὲ πεντωρόφους κατασκευάσαι), and a papyrus from late fourth-century Hermupolis mentions a house with even seven floors (οἰκία ἑπτάστεγος in *P.Oxy.* 34.2719, l. 9; cf. Maehler 1983, 120 n. 11). Some houses had a basement level as well.

Prices for houses varied considerably and depended on their size, quality, condition, and location. Houses in cities were on average twice as expensive as in the villages because of their more durable building materials, such as stone in contrast to mud brick, higher value of land, and greater number of floor levels. Maehler calculated that on average a village house cost 631 drachmas; however, one in the metropoleis of Hermupolis, Antinoupolis, and Oxyrhynchus cost on average 1,155 drachmas (Maehler 1983: 120). Prices for a village house in the Fayum in Roman times varied considerably, ranging

between 120 and 1,500 drachmas for the cheapest and most expensive respectively recorded for Soknopaiou Nesos. Architectural elements that are mentioned in the sales contracts studied by Maehler are an entrance gate, a cortile or courtyard surrounded by walls, a (banqueting) hall, small chambers, a well or draw well, a bath, an oven, a shed, an exedra, and a porch.

Houses mentioned in these contracts, unless described otherwise, were built from dried mud brick, which confirms therefore the archaeological evidence. Stone houses were the exception and explicitly described as such in the papyri. Since houses built from mud brick rarely lasted many years, some houses that were sold were only fit for demolition; the buyer therefore hardly paid more than the land value. We know from the archaeological record that new houses were built on top of collapsed ones, with the lower rooms serving as foundations for the new building.

The more affluent the owner seems to have been, the more parts of his house were fabricated from wood. A carpenter's contract from the third-century BCE Arsinoite nome lists the parts made from wood of a house that certainly belonged to a well-to-do citizen: windows with bars and paneled sides, latticed windows, doors with two faces, several doors with paneled sides for in total 180 drachmas (*P.Mich.* 1.38). Very few doors or windows have been found in scientific excavations of Roman Egyptian houses, even if wood as a perishable material had a better chance of surviving in Egypt than anywhere else in the Roman world. This might be partly due to the fact that wooden doors and windows might have been taken with them by the owners of the houses or looted after the site had been abandoned.⁴

From the papyri we learn that a house usually had three to four entrances closed by doors: the main entrance, the entrance via the staircase, and the entrance via the courtyard. A notice to the chief of police at Tebtynis from the early second century BCE reads (*P.Tebt.* 3.795, APIS translation): "after I had shut the door of the men's apartments and that of the staircase and the yard-doors of my house").⁵ In addition, there were certainly several interior doors that could be locked as well, such as a room for a tenant lodging in part of the house. The access to a house was strictly regulated, and it was not necessarily the case that someone who owned a share of a house could use all its entrances and rooms: "You may go up [to] and down [from] the roof on the stairway of this aforesaid house and may go in and out of the fore hall and the main doorway, and of the exits of this house and this aforesaid courtyard" (*P.Chic.Haw.* 5 from 285–246 BCE; APIS translation. Cf. also *P.Chic.Haw.* 7A + 7B; *P.Chic.Haw.* 9). Contracts set out which of the doors the tenant or share-buyer was allowed to use.⁶ Some sales contracts stipulated that the buyer had to create a new entrance for his living area: "We guarantee the sale on mutual security ... on condition that Herakles shall open for himself a door from the four ells up to those on the east of them into the designated three ells of the common entrance and exit" (*P.Mich.* 5.305 from the first century BCE;

APIS translation). On the other hand, some parts of the house, such as the roof terrace, seem to have been used by all residents.

The entrances from the street and from the courtyard were carefully locked by decorated wooden doors turning on pivots and secured by a variety of heavy locks or sliding bolts made of wood. In a marital quarrel a husband hid the keys from his wife, and used the occasion when she left the house to shut her out: “he again hid the keys from me; and when I had gone out to the church at Sambatho he had the outside doors shut on me” (*P.Oxy.* 6.903 from the fourth century CE; APIS translation).

A thief who broke in often seems to have come via the locked entrance of the courtyard: “Pan[.]maules lifted off the outer bar of the door of the courtyard and threshing floor and carried off whatever was in the house” (*P.Thomas* 14 from the second half of the second century, APIS translation; Hagedorn, *ZPE* 142 (2003): 143–4). Adymos from early second-century BCE Berenikis Thesmophoru (Arsinoites) reports a theft to the *komogrammateus*: “certain persons having made an incursion into the quarters belonging to me opened the room in the courtyard and stole a mill which I value at 500 drachmas and from the courtyard three young sheep worth 600 drachmas” (*P.Tebt.* 3.1.793 from 183 BCE; APIS translation). Another notification of theft from 186 BCE Tebtynis tells us that each bedroom had a door which was kept closed during the night: “On the night between the 10th and 11th of the aforesaid month certain persons climbed into our house, and [came] into the vestibule, while our people were asleep in their chambers with the doors shut” (*P.Tebt.* 3.796; APIS translation). To break in, another victim of a theft reports the burglars removed the nails from the door: “Some persons made a thievish incursion into my house in the village on the night before the 22nd of the present month Hathyr, taking advantage of my absence on account of my mourning for my daughter’s husband, and extracting the nails from the doors carried off all that I had stored in the house” (*P.Tebt.* 2.332 from 176 CE; APIS translation).

Sentheus of the village of Dionysias (Arsinoite nome) seems to have suspected that someone might try to break into his house during the night and therefore had made his bed at the front door. While he was sleeping, though, the thieves came in by digging a tunnel under his house’s wall from the adjacent beer-shop. Having gained entry they carried off cash and various household items (*P.Ryl.* 2.127 from 29 CE). As we see here and in the following case, not all thieves came through the door. A certain Pakysis from early third-century CE Soknopaiou Nesos (Arsinoite nome) occupied a room on the upper floor in the house of his daughter-in-law where he stored grain for his nourishment. “Lately as my relatives went to the room because I myself was in Alexandria, it was discovered that the grain stores had been pilfered. The cause of the theft has become apparent to have been that the ill deed was perpetrated when the room, which is situated in the upper level, had been holed through the floor. ... Those who are living there were [convinced]

that this had happened through their malicious aforethought” (*BGU* 1.322 from 216 CE; HGV translation).

In petitions concerning house raids one of the things mentioned above all other valuable items stolen were wooden doors: “They went to my house and throwing off all restraint knocked down the street door, and having gained an entrance they carried off the articles mentioned below. ... Two doors of tamarisk-wood; a footstool, a hoe, 700 drachmas of copper; and a bronze ...” (*P.Tebt.* 1.45 from 113 BCE; APIS translation). Another petition for recovery of property from the village of Kerkeosiris reads: “With very many other persons armed with swords, suddenly came upon my house, and, having thrown off all restraint, they shattered the doors. Having made an entry, they carried off a door...” (*P.Tebt.* 4.1095 from 113 BCE; APIS translation).⁷

Houses or shares of houses could be leased for short or long periods of time. Tenants paid their rents monthly, half-yearly in two six-month installments (e.g., *P.Oxy.* 16.1957 from 430 CE Oxyrhynchus; *P.Oslo* 3.138 from 323 CE Oxyrhynchus), or yearly (*SB* 22.15620 from 424 Alabastrine, Antinoites). We have one case in which the owner demanded the entire rent for a house and its courtyard in one sum for the following six years (*P.Tebt.* 2.372 from 141 CE Tebtynis). This lease stresses once more the central importance and value of (wooden) doors and their keys, as anything made from wood seems to have been the most valuable part of a mud-brick house: “After its expiration Areios shall deliver to us, the party of Geminus, the house free of all damage with the doors as they stand and the keys” (*P.Tebt.* 2.372; APIS translation).⁸ Other demotic and Greek sales and lease contracts from the third century BCE to the first century CE stress that a house was provided with “beam and door” (*P.Chic.Haw.* 4; *P.Chic.Haw.* 5; *P.Chic.Haw.* 7A + 7B; *P.Chic.Haw.* 9; *P.Mich.* 5.253; Nims 1937, 37–9, pl. V–VI, and 39–47, pl. VI–VII; cf. Hickey, and Manning 2004).

The Sons of Psemonches: Families in the City of the Childbirth Goddess

Let us proceed with a case study of several families living in Eileithya Polis (City of the Goddess of Childbirth), modern Elkab, in the first half of the second century CE. This case is exemplary because it presents one of the few instances where documents collected by a family were found *in situ* where their owners left them, enabling us to trace household structure and changing family composition over time. During the excavations of Elkab by the Comité des fouilles belges en Egypte, under the direction of Herman De Meulenaere, between 1968 and 1981 many documentary texts were discovered in the private houses of Greco-Roman times, and the excavators paid particular

attention to recording the find-spots of the ostraca (Limme 2008).

Usually we do not know the archaeological context – papers and documents that once belonged together are often found on ancient rubbish heaps and necropolises, later sold to various institutions, and today kept scattered over various papyrus collections around the world. Only by prosopographical analysis are scholars able to recognize interconnections between single papyri and identify the same individuals and families repeatedly mentioned in a number of papyri; the archaeological context, however, is almost always lost. In other cases, as for instance at Tebtynis in the Arsinoite nome, many papyri were discovered in these Roman houses and their find locations were noted, so that we can actually connect many papyri with a particular building. Here, however, the archaeological reports of the Italian team of excavators of the Greco-Roman settlement have never been fully published. Over the following decades sand and wind eroded many of the mud-brick constructions so that today little is left of what was originally discovered by Gilbert Bagnani and his team.

The site of modern Elkab on the east side of the Nile, 90 km south of Luxor and about 80 km north of Thebes on the road to Edfu, noticeable from far away because of its massive mud-brick enclosure wall, was occupied from the Neolithic period onwards. From the Early Dynastic period up to the Ptolemaic period the city's name was Nekheb. Its patron goddess was the vulture goddess Nekhbet, identified with Greek Eileithyia, the goddess of childbirth. During Ptolemaic and Roman times the site was known by its Greek name, Eileithyaspolis, a seemingly flourishing village in the first half of the second century where many potters and weavers had their workshops. Others made a living from exploiting the natural local reserves of natron for which Elkab was famous in antiquity. In addition, probably every household cultivated a modest piece of land for subsistence (Bingen and Clarysse 1989: 41). The village of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods located southeast of the temple of Eileithyaspolis had a rectilinear street plan with rectangular houses constructed in mud brick. Only in the last active phase of occupation, around 150 CE, did occupants start to disregard the rigid layout. As Hendrickx, one of the excavators, reports, bread ovens and house extensions were built into streets, sometimes even blocking them for passers-through (Hendrickx 1998). The rectangular houses, each with several rooms, were surprisingly spacious, even if they do not seem to have had a second floor and their ground floor was simply covered with a mud-brick vault. Families living in the houses, however, did not have a lot of space: we will see that each house probably housed more than one family, and in addition workshops and storage space. Around 380 CE the village was abruptly abandoned for unknown reasons and the houses' walls razed to the ground; many objects, however, remained, among them bronze coins, pottery, and Greek and demotic texts written on potsherds. Most of these texts served as tax receipts kept there by the

inhabitants as proof of the payment of their taxes (De Meulenaere *et al.* 1970, 36–9; Quaegebeur 1981, 527–36; 1992, 671–85; Bingen, and Clarysse 1989).

In house B, with its 238 m² the largest of the excavated area, a great number of ostraca were found (*O.Elkab* 65–84, 106–7, 109). Of these, 23 belong to the so-called archive of Psemonches and his five sons, Pekysis, Premmechis, Pamonthes, Psemonches, and Siphouris. The father Psemonches, son of Pthoumon, himself appears once in a tax receipt of 106 CE, and his son Pekysis is mentioned once in 109 and must have been at this point at least 14 years old to be liable to pay the tax as well. Premmechis is mentioned once in 115; Pamonthes is mentioned in a tax receipt in 119; Psemonches appears repeatedly in tax receipts dating to 122, 123, and 127 CE, as does Siphouris in tax receipts dating to 119, 120, 121, and 131 CE. Psemonches may have died shortly after 106, as the only tax receipt we have from him dates to that year (*O.Elkab* 65). All these texts are receipts for the payment of the poll tax (*laographia*), the tax for maintenance of dykes (*chômatikon*), and one other tax (*merismos aphanon*), and all were found together in rooms a–c.

Psemonches and his sons were probably potters producing amphorae for the transport of natron (Hendrickx 1998: 1355–7). In four rooms of house B the typical rectangular potter's basin has been found that was probably used for the decantation of the clay.⁹ While 238 m² seems enormous for a residential house, considering, however, that actually at least half of the space was used as workrooms (rooms a, i, h, and h') and in addition several families, among them one family with at least five sons and an unknown number of daughters, occupied the house simultaneously, this certainly meant that the space each household member could claim for him- or herself was very small. Moreover, we see here that areas of family life and work overlapped in the house; there was no clear-cut dichotomy between the two. This family of potters produced its own pottery as well as trading with ceramics not produced locally.

Potsherds of ceramic made in Assuan and Luxor have also been found in the house. A few items, a small bottle and potsherds of two bowls of very fine ceramic, suggest an even further provenance, from outside Egypt (Hendrickx 1998: 1366). While the potters seem to have worked the clay in their own house, they used the adjacent house A to dry and fire their ceramics. House A, which might even have been directly accessible via a door from house B, consists of just two rooms, a very large one, which might have served as a storage room for drying the ceramics produced in house B (with two or rather three ovens certainly built for firing ceramics apparently no longer in use in Roman times), and a smaller room, in which three small ovens were found. House B did not have its own ovens, which suggests that not only the firing of ceramics but probably also the cooking and baking of bread took place in house A (Hendrickx 1998:1368–9).

Psemonches and his sons were not the last inhabitants of this house before it was abandoned. In the same house the excavators found two further archives:

one, contemporary to that of Psemonches and his sons, by a man named Niaraus dating to 116–27 CE (Clarysse 2004b) and another by the weaver Phatres dating to 132/3 CE (Clarysse 2004e). Even though house B was the largest complex of the excavated area, it is surprising that it apparently was lived in at one time by at least two seemingly unrelated multiple-family households, one with at least three co-residing brothers and an unknown number of wives and children, and another family with at least one son. The six texts belonging to Niaraus' archive, dating as noted to 116–27 (*O.Elkab* 85–90) and therefore to the same period as three of Psemonches' sons, were found likewise in rooms a–c. Niaraus and his son paid different kinds of taxes from Psemonches, namely for *geometria*, which shows them to be landowners, and the ferry-boat tax. They probably lived together under one roof with three sons of Psemonches for a period of at least 11 or 12 years.

We might wonder what relationship there was between Niaraus, son of Senarptos, and his son Sisonchis and Psemonches and his sons. Our knowledge from the census returns might help us here to judge the likelihood of possible relations. While we know that brothers even if they were already married were the most commonly co-residing family members, we know from his patronym that Niaraus was not a brother of Psemonches – at least not a paternal one (he theoretically could have been a half-brother on his mother's side, but in a patriarchal society such as that of Roman Egypt which was marked by patrivirilocal residence patterns maternal half-siblings usually did not share a household). Niaraus and his son might simply have been unrelated lodgers or just very distantly related to Psemonches' family. But would a lodger have shared the house's office and would he have stored his documents in the same domestic archive as the proprietors of the house? Since Psemonches disappears very early from his family's archive, he could have also been the new husband of Psemonches' widow. From the census returns we know, however, that a widow, especially when she already had adult sons, very rarely remarried. And if she did, she would not bring her new husband to her late husband's house but would leave the family home. Another constellation we might think of – and judging from the census returns the most likely one – is that Niaraus was a cousin of the brothers. His father, Senarptos, might have been a brother of Psemonches and house B their paternal home. Niaraus seems to have lived with the brothers for about 11 or 12 years before he left the household shortly after 127 CE.

The fact that Niaraus and his family moved in, however, made two sons of Psemonches leave the house: Pekysis and Pamonthes moved out apparently around the same time as Niaraus moved in, about 115 CE. While the first tax payment of Pekysis from the year 109, when he was probably still a teenager, was found in his paternal home, house B, (*O.Elkab* 66), Pekysis later lived in house Z, a house only half the size of his father's. The five texts of his archive that have been found there date to the period between 116 and 125 (*O.Elkab*

171–4, 177). Pamonthes, who left his parental house at about the same time as his brother Pekysis, moved to house N. While one tax receipt of Pamonthes dating to 119 was found in his father's house (*O.Elkab* 68), 17 texts dating to the period between 115 and 124 (*O.Elkab* 116–31, 159, 169) were found in house N. Except for a few fragments found outside the house, north of room b, all receipts were found together in the southern part of the house (room f).

And here from the archaeological context we gain information that so often we do not find in the data of the census returns. In the latter we see merely that two sons left their father's house, but we do not know where they went, whether they died, whether they left for military service, or just moved around the corner. For this family, however, we do know: Even if Pekysis and Pamonthes left their paternal home, they stayed in their paternal village, even in the same quarter, and founded their own households close by. Houses Z and N were just a few dozen meters away (Clarysse 2004c, 2004d). Pekysis and Pamonthes, if they worked as potters like their father and brothers, certainly did not open a new workshop at their new places of residence because their new houses did not have the typical potter's basins. They either pursued a different career or they went back to work in their father's home but lived with their families in the two houses nearby (Hendrickx 1998: 1358).

However, Pamonthes did not occupy house N alone with his family. A certain Arrethis, son of Onnophris, also stored his tax receipts in room f of the same house, and three tax receipts date to a period overlapping that of Pamonthes, namely from 120/1 to 129 CE (*O.Elkab* 132, 134–40, 151 descr.; cf. Clarysse 2004a. Here again at least two families shared the house whose heads were certainly not brothers, but might have been cousins.

Let us return to the old family home which apparently stayed in the family for about 25 years after the death of the father, Psemonches. Three of his sons seem to have left the house in the fall of 132 CE. The last tax receipt we have from them dates to 8 August 132. Just after that another family moved in: that of Phatres, the weaver. We have five texts from his archive that date from between November 132 and July 133 CE (*O.Elkab* 91–5). His tax receipts were also found in rooms a–c, which makes us think that this area of the house apparently served as an office or domestic archive for whoever inhabited the house.

Thanks to these texts it is possible to gain an insight into the domestic context of these families and the development of living patterns over the course of a few decades, information that we usually cannot gain from the census returns, which are detached from the archaeological context and allow one family and household to be traced over a period of time – not, however, several individual families who simultaneously inhabited one house. Very surprisingly we see that one house was inhabited by several seemingly unrelated families over the same period of time; the men of the family even shared their office and domestic archive with each other. In the census returns

we would have most probably seen these people registered as two different households without being able to recognize that these two households occupied the same physical house. Moreover, the find-spots of the ostraca from Eileithyaspolis even allow us to trace where members of this family moved when they left their parental home. While we see in the census returns – and only if we are in the fortunate situation of having several consecutive census returns from one and the same household – that family members left, we never know where they went, for what reason they left, whether they died, or if they remained in the same neighborhood or village.

Conclusion

Houses of the common people in Roman Egypt were modest in size and had two or three, sometimes four, rooms. They were of rectangular shape, on average about 30–50 m² in area, most often built from mud brick, and, even if built next to each other, did not share their outer walls. Archaeological reports suggest that houses were not, once constructed, unchangeable entities but were continuously modified and rebuilt to respond to the changing needs of its inhabitants, whether a house was expanded by additional rooms or another floor level, or subdivided to fit several families where formerly just one had lived. The non-durable construction from mud bricks, however, also meant that houses and their parts needed constant maintenance, repairs, and replacements. This fact contradicts Alston's assumption that "the particular pile of bricks had more significant associations for Romano-Egyptians" than in other cultures (Alston 2002: 126). Rather the opposite seems to be true, in my opinion: while the material house held little significance for the individual, it was a very economical, quickly built structure that lasted at most a few decades before it needed to be leveled and rebuilt. It was the household as the community of its residents was significant, rather than the architecture of the house which I believe held little emotional investment.

The modest town house offered little comfort and its inhabitants probably had little furnishing apart from straw mats and palm branches functioning as sofas and beds. They usually had a small open courtyard for cooking, milling grain, and baking bread, where probably also a couple of small animals such as pigeons, goats, and maybe even pigs were kept, a staircase to reach the first or even second floor, and a basement with a vaulted low ceiling where food was stored. The exact layout of village houses varied from region to region.

The women of the household – sometimes together with the women of neighboring houses – most likely spent the greater part of their day in the open courtyard occupied with preparing meals, baking bread, and tending the small animals, while the men probably spent most of their day in the fields. Family members slept in rooms that could be locked by keys, so these must be

the smaller rooms at the end of the house away from the main entrance. The main room to the street served probably as the room for eating, socializing, and welcoming guests.

Moreover, daily life within the domestic space was not only organized spatially but also temporally, meaning that not only physical subdivisions separated ongoing activities but also that a room that belonged to the men in the mornings might have been used by the women in the afternoons. The room where the female slaves slept at night might have served as the master's reception room in the morning. If domestic space was like this or similarly arranged, even in these small houses the women and men of the household may have pursued their daily activities separated from each other. If, however, the family made their living from a craft, such as the potters discussed above, an entirely different setup of the house seems possible, because here production of pottery and domestic activities overlapped spatially.

As excavations of domestic architecture in Middle and Upper Egypt have shown, houses in the Roman period did not follow the Roman or classical Greek type but, though exhibiting a patchwork of cultural influences, rather belong to an indigenous Egyptian type documented for the region for earlier as well as later periods. It was just the houses of the well-to-do of Roman times, in addition to having a richer decor than those of the middle classes, that included elements of the Aegean peristyle house, thereby followed Greek rather than Roman architectural models and expressed their Greco-Egyptian identity not only via their names and bilingualism but also via their domestic architecture. The further away we move from the Mediterranean coast and up the Nile, fewer Greek influences can be ascertained, and more houses seem to be indigenous Egyptian in style and layout.

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Notes

- 1 Pharaonic Egypt: Pestman 1961; Wente 1990; Eyre 1992, 2007; Janssen and Janssen 2007. Ptolemaic Egypt: Pomeroy 1984; Lewis 1986; Clarysse and Thompson 2006. Nineteenth-and twentieth-century Egypt: Tucker 1988, 1993; Cuno 1995, 2005; Inhorn 1996.
- 2 Van Minnen 1994: 231: "A period of about 70 years separates the earliest movable objects [read: papyri] from a house in one level from those in the level immediately above it."

- 3 Davoli 1998: 93–4. However, in other regions of the Fayum, such as in Medinet Ghoran, where limestone was abundant but water was rare (necessary to produce mud bricks), houses were mainly built from local stone (Davoli 1998: 220). For Tebtynis, see Hadji-Minaglou 2007, 2008: 123–34. See also Boozer’s chapter in this volume.
- 4 Depraetere studied the various forms of keys and locks found in a domestic context for Roman Egypt. His results match the conclusions from the papyri.
- 5 Cf. *P.Mich.* 6.425 from 198 CE: “I appeal, my lord, against Kastor, tax collector’s assistant of the village of Karanis [...] This person, who held me in contempt because of my infirmity, for I have only one eye and I do not see with it although it appears to have sight, so that I am utterly worthless in both, victimized me, having first publicly abused me and my mother, after maltreating her with numerous blows and demolishing all four doors of mine with an ax so that our entire house is wide open and accessible to every malefactor” (APIS translation).
- 6 *P.Tebt.* 2.383 from 46 CE: “on the north the aforesaid entrance and exit into which the aforesaid Tamarres and her assigns and heirs shall open a door from the ... an entrance and exit leading from ..., and the said Tamarres and her assigns and heirs shall enter and go out through the exit leading to the north and east, on the west a public road” (ed. translation).
- 7 Cf. *P.Tebt.* 1.47 from 113 BCE (APIS translation): “invaded our house with many other persons armed with swords and incontinently knocked down the street door, and placing this against the tower broke through part of it. Having effected an entry and knocked down the remaining doors they carried off the articles mentioned below. [...] The itemized list is: a door of tamarisk wood, two hoes, 200 drachmas of bronze.”; *P.Tebt.* 3.781 from 164 BCE (APIS translation): “and carried off the door-fixtures and other doors to the number of more than 110”; *P.Mich.* 5.226 from 37 CE (APIS translation): “The doors which belonged there had been carried off by them”.
- 8 Cf. *SB* 18.13154 from the second/first century BCE (APIS translation): “Having handed over to Olympias or her people the property thoroughly clean and the five doors and the five keys which he received, he must pay Olympias for not vacating a fine of 20 talents of copper and for each door which he does not give back a price of 3,000 drachmas – but for the street door 2 talents – [and for each key X bronze drachmas] and for not cleaning a fee of 2,000 bronze drachmas and nevertheless he must be evicted [together with his people].” Also, *P.Mich.* 14.678 from 98 CE (APIS translation): “I shall give back the house free from dirt of every kind with the doors intact and the keys”; *P.Tebt.* 2.372 from 141 CE (APIS

translation): “after its expiration Areios shall deliver to us, the party of Geminus, the house free of all damage with the doors as they stand and the keys”; *P.Oxy.* 3.502 from 164 CE (ed. translation): “thereafter [she] shall deliver them up free from filth and with the doors and keys received by her of all the premises”; *P.Turner* 37 from 270 CE (APIS translation): “after this period I will give the house with all the doors and keys.”

- 9 Hendrickx 1998: 1363: “La maison B est beaucoup plus grande que la maison F. Elle mesure 11,9 m × 20 m, mais l’interprétation de la division interne de la maison pose certains problèmes, puisque l’histoire de cette maison est assez compliquée ... Dans cette maison, dont le plan original n’est pas clair, il y a eu plusieurs transformations, ce dont témoignent des bouts de fondations de murs. La partie nord de la maison (chambres a–d) ne semble pas touchée par les transformations. Cette partie forme apparemment ‘une maison dans la maison,’ ce qui pourrait bien s’accorder avec la présence de plusieurs familles. On ignore tout de ce qui s’est passé dans la chambre (g) et de son extension à côté de la chambre (d). Très probablement la maison était rectangulaire et il y avait donc encore une chambre à côté de la chambre (d). Dans la partie sud de la maison, où se trouvent deux bassins de décantation (chambres h–i), trois phases de construction peuvent être distinguées. La canalisation appartient la deuxième phase. Pendant la dernière phase, l’installation de décantation n’était plus utilisée.”

Towards an Archaeology of Household Relationships in Roman Egypt

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Introduction

Roman Egypt serves as a prime locale for interdisciplinary studies of population histories due to the high preservation of written sources and physical houses. The written sources include census data, legal and inheritance documents, and well-documented written histories through which we can trace diachronic developments (Scheidel 2001: xxiii). In addition to these textual sources, we have physical remains of houses, which have been excavated for over 100 years in different regions across Egypt. Despite the obvious advantages of pursuing holistic research upon population histories in Roman Egypt, the archaeology has not been exploited for its rich potential to explore the material remains of houses in tandem with these written sources.

The rich material remains from Roman Egypt contribute a different perspective on daily life than the documentary sources, allowing for a multivalent perspective on household composition and extended family relationships. Although archaeological data can serve as a valuable resource for contemporary debates in demographic studies, it is important to retain an element of caution when drawing upon architectural and material remains. There is a vast interpretive leap from architectural space to interpretations of household composition and we must remain mindful of this gap when drawing interpretations from physical evidence. The present work explores a dialogue between the documentary and archaeological evidence of extended household relationships in order to determine the realities of daily life in Roman Egypt as well as the parameters of what archaeological data can reveal about household composition.

The primary objective of this chapter is to devise a methodology for archaeologically exploring household and intra-site relationships in Roman Egypt. An archaeological methodology will enable us to interpret extant Romano-Egyptian house data alongside emerging archaeological data from ongoing excavations. Case studies from existing household data will point towards future lines of research upon this topic. To this end, in this chapter I present a theoretical background, a methodology, and then three case studies

followed by a discussion of the evidence as well as suggestions for future lines of research upon this topic.

The three case studies derive from two different regions in Roman Egypt, the Fayum and the Dakhleh Oasis (Figure 10.1). These two regions furnish contrasting material evidence of extended household networks, which helps us to devise an archaeological approach to household relationships. First, I draw upon the large corpus of domestic data from the Fayum in order to detect large trends in the built domestic environment. Although the Fayum provides us with a great number of excavated houses to explore, we only have very basic chronological and typological data from these sites because of the way they were analyzed and published (Boak *et al.* 1935; Boak and Peterson 1931; Husselman 1979; van Minnen 1994). In order to provide a close analysis of individual households and their potential compositions, I draw upon contextual domestic data produced by recent excavations in the Dakhleh Oasis (Boozer 2007; Hope 2002; Hope and Whitehouse 2006; Boozer 2015b). Because there are fewer excavated houses to examine from Dakhleh, so regional trends are still emergent. The combination of data from both regions provides us with refined and broad data sets that inform our understanding of extended family relationships in Roman Egypt more generally. By drawing upon emerging research and extant data on Romano-Egyptian houses, this contribution serves both as an interpretation of what has already been produced as well as a suggestion for future lines of research on this topic.

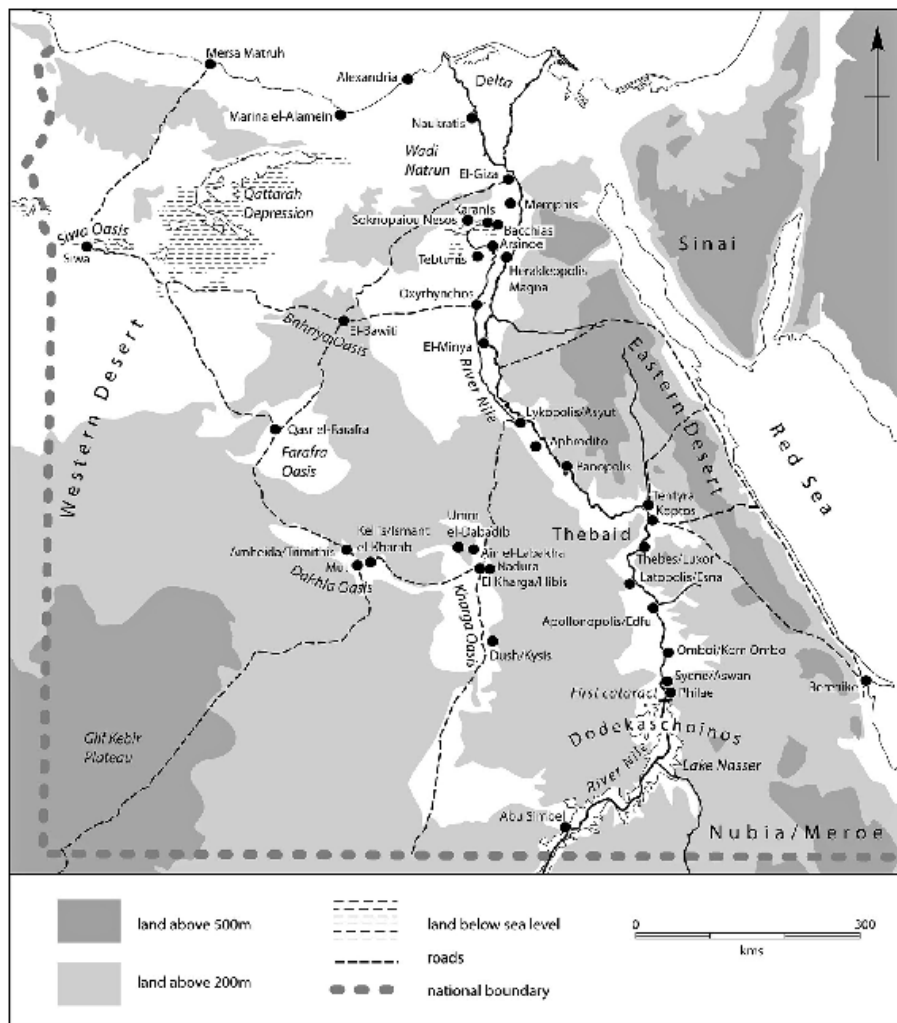


Figure 10.1 Map of Roman Egypt (M. Matthews).

Theoretical Background: Households and Houses

The introduction to this volume has already explored relevant terminology on households and families cross-culturally. In the present work, which focuses on material remains, the term “house” refers to an architectural unit, while the term “household” describes a basic unit of economic and social cooperation (Blanton 1994: 5; Wilk and Rathje 1982: 620). The two terms do not necessarily map on to the same physical structure. Looking to documentary sources from Roman Egypt more specifically, it is clear that the notion of family was complicated and by no means a self-evidence concept. Our understanding of the “typical” modern Western family is the exception rather

than the rule for what constitutes family in Roman Egypt (Saller 1994: 74–101). For example, Roman Oxyrhynchus provides a wealth of documentary sources that provide several different meanings of the term family (Bagnall 2007: 184).

It is also clear that the compositions of households varied considerably from house to house. Bagnall and Lewis suggest that between nine and 11 people occupied the average house at any one time, although it is likely that the numbers of individuals who occupied these spaces varied considerably during the occupational history of structures. I argue for this variation on the basis that 25.3 per cent of households were multiple family households – in other words two brothers or sisters and their spouses, or a married couple with married children who remained in the parental home. These multiple family households tended to have 10.36 people in them within towns (Bagnall and Frier 1994: 57–64, especially 68). Van Minnen has argued that 4.5 people would share a dwelling with four to five rooms (van Minnen 1994: 235–6). For Philadelphia, the calculated number of people per house is nine (Bagnall and Frier 1994, 68–9). Mortality rates and birthrates were higher than in the present era and therefore there would be fluctuations in household size over time.

The link between families and the buildings themselves are no less complicated in Roman Egypt. Papyrological evidence suggests that families have little sense of long-term identification with any particular structure (Bagnall 2007: 185). Egyptians tended to divide their real property, including houses, among all of their children, male and female, which often lead to the fragmentation of properties (Pestman 1969). Due to these inheritance practices, it was possible to buy and sell fractions of houses (Pestman 1961, 1969). These fractions could be dealt with practically through the use of “virtual” fractions rather than real fractions of houses. The virtual fractioning of houses is impossible to track in the archaeological record. Scheidel argues that brother-sister marriage practices evinced in the Fayum documentary sources may have enabled families to join or reunite house fractions (Scheidel 1996: 9–51).

Turning to the physical evidence, we find considerable archaeological theory that can be tied to the built remains of Romano-Egyptian houses. An *a priori* assumption of the present work is that shared architectural traits will reflect and encourage a shared world-view, while divergent architectural traits may be emblematic of social differences (Bachelard 1994; Bourdieu 1966; Donley-Reid 1990; Hillier and Hanson 1984; Tringham 2000). Archaeologists have explored this assumption successfully in other regions through examining built space in relation to social units, permanent and temporary spatial divisions, and how artifact categories and decoration correlate to room usage (Allison 1992a, 1992b, 1999; Laurence 1994; Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill 1997; Meskell 2002; Nevett 2010).

A second theory underpins the present work. Previous archaeological research has indicated that shared activity spaces suggest shared social relationships (e.g., shared cooking spaces) (Brody 2011, especially 249). This assertion entails that individuals who worked closely with one another probably had closer social ties than individuals who worked autonomously. Social contact begets social contact.

This prior work on built spaces carries implications for how we explore the papyrological and archaeological data upon houses. For example, the archaeological record does not verify the physical division of houses. On the basis of the papyrology, Muhs suggests that Egyptians tried to avoid the creation of permanent physical divisions within houses (Muhs 2008: 188). This avoidance could have been accomplished through the “virtual” fractions of houses, mentioned above, or through multi-family occupancy.

Determining how one might detect the presence of multiple families within one house, or families reaching across houses, is an exceedingly difficult archaeological challenge. One means of accomplishing this task might be found through examining places where key household tasks took place. A second means of examining social organization is through looking at the use of public space and the relationships between houses.

First, food preparation, weaving, and animal husbandry, served as significant domestic activities and which may be readily identifiable archaeologically. Courtyards and cooking areas are often easily identifiable in site plans, even among poorly excavated sites. Despite high variability between size, location, and privacy, the presence of this space, and the ways in which households used courtyards, was consistent. Courtyard activities typically included food preparation, agricultural work, and animal husbandry. Food preparation activities included milling grain and cooking food, on both open fires and in closed ovens. Feeding troughs and shelters for animals were often in the same courtyard, but they could also be located in a separate one (Davoli 1998: 85).

From documentary sources it is clear that Romano-Egyptians considered exterior courtyards (an *aule*) to be a separate entity from the house itself. For example, a woman, Tasoucharion, lists her property for the census and describes a “house with a courtyard” (Rowlandson 1998:141–2). Likewise, the courtyard of Hawara House E is described in the following terms; “the courtyard forms the western side of the house” *P.Ashm.* I 7 (187/186 BCE) (discussed in Uytterhoeven 2010: 323). Documentary records also make it clear that this space could be sold separately from the house and that individuals could own more than one *aule* (on *aule* sold separately from the house, see *P.Oxy.* III 505; XIV 1696; 1697. On individuals owning more than one *aule*, see *P.Mich.* VI 428). Physically, the peripheral location of *aule* found at sites such as Karanis suggest that these spaces could be exchanged between neighboring parties quite easily (Alston 2002: 59). Moreover, it was not uncommon for houses to co-opt alleyways and parts of streets for use as

an *aule*.

On the other hand, internal courtyards (an *aithrion*) formed an integral, central part of the house and mainly occurred in urban houses (Alston 2002: 209, 59–61; Husson 1983: 29–36; Uytterhoeven 2010: 324). No documentary sources mention the sale of *aithria* separate from that of a house, which suggests that the *aithrion* was an integral feature of the house (Alston 2002: 60).

Documentary sources make it clear that the *aithrion* could contain domestic equipment and that they were used in a similar manner as the *aule* (*P.Oxy.* XII 1488). Houses could have both an *aule* and an *aithrion*, but sometimes *aithria* house descriptions do not mention an *aule*. This lack may indicate that the presence of an *aithrion* meant that an *aule* was unnecessary. Documentary evidence of *aithria* is unevenly distributed between cities and villages. Most *aithria* houses come from urban contexts, while most of the village attestations of *aithria* houses come from Tebtunis in the Fayum (Alston 2002: 59).

Second, houses closely clustered together and that exchanged public and private space between suggests close social and economic domestic organization. The potential to construct an *aule* out of an alleyway or of an *aule* to exchange hands also could signify neighborhood connections. Pre-planned settlements and regimented public spaces suggest that fewer socioeconomic negotiations took place between houses.

In summation, I will explore key attributes of functional domestic areas within and outside of houses in order to suggest social ties between the individuals who occupied physical houses. The cooking and courtyard spaces are key to this process since they are easily identifiable on site plans, even from sites for which we lack nuanced archaeological data. In this analysis, *aithria* (internal courtyards) suggest greater autonomy than *aule* (external courtyards). Additional attributes that point towards shared spaces between physical houses will also be explored as these shared spaces most likely suggest close household relationships.

Methodology

I formed two lists of variables to explore in my analyses. These variables build upon the theoretical models described above as well as recent archaeological approaches to single house and intra-site analyses. Most particularly, Gadot's study of Iron Age I sites in Israel has provided a model for my own approach (2011: 159–61). These variables aim to access the social connections within and between households that were embedded in architectural layout and style.

The first grouping of variables examines the single house in order to gain a sense of social dynamics within the house. The attributes that I explore are ones that convey information about economic stratum, cultural influences, closeness of interaction between household members, and so on.

The first grouping of variables includes the following:

Table 10.1 Group 1: The single house.

Building techniques and materials	Building materials employed for floors, walls, ceilings, and staircases. Differences found in building materials may signify social rank and economic stratification (Crocker (1985) conducts such an analysis for New Kingdom Amarna houses). Decoration may entail differential status or use of rooms (Allison 1992b).
Building size	External measurements of the buildings, the net floor area, and the exterior courtyard area (when present). These measurements will be examined in order to see whether differences in building sizes indicate differences in wealth or family size (Crocker 1985).
Orientation	The orientation of building entrances. Is there a pattern in the orientation of entrances? Is there a direction that is systematically avoided? Orientation has both functional and symbolic meaning (Daniel 2010; Faust 2001). For example, wind and sun are often accounted for in doorway placements. Patterns in household arrangement may help in recognizing symbolic choices that groups share.
Courtyard location	The courtyard's location, whether exterior or interior. Is the courtyard in the center of the house or behind the house? Is the courtyard privately or publicly accessible? Courtyard location may denote the degree of household autonomy, degree of social control, and the development of the household as a socioeconomic unit

	(Byrd 1994; Hillier and Hanson 1984).
Space syntax	The number of rooms within the building, the divisions of spaces, the courtyard location, and the connections between rooms exemplify conceptions of what a house should look like, how it should function, and to whom it should be accessible (Hillier and Hanson 1984).

The second grouping of variables relates to intra-site analysis and the relationships between houses. In particular, this second grouping explores economic and status markers, similarities and differences between houses, and the potential for shared work spaces.

The second grouping of variables includes the following attributes:

Table 10.2 Group 2: Intra-site analysis and relations between houses.

Location in the settlement	The location of the house within the site. Is the building located in the center of the site or its periphery? Is the house on high or low ground in relation to other buildings at the site? Is the house on a major roadway?
Relations with other buildings	The physical relationship of the house to neighboring houses and structures. Do buildings share a courtyard, alleyway or party walls? Do they form part of a pre-planned <i>insula</i> or did the area grow organically?
Uniformity in architectural layout	Is there clear uniformity of plan between houses? Or is there disparity in how the buildings are laid out?

Case Studies

For the present study, I analyze four complete houses from Soknopaiou Nesos, in the Fayum, which were excavated in the early 1930s. I then examine four houses from Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab), which were excavated in the 1980s and 1990s using modern techniques. Finally, I consider two houses from Trimithis (Amheida) in the Dakhleh Oasis, which were excavated in the 2000s. I present

each of these case studies and then compare the results from these case studies as well as make some observations on the viability of the archaeological approach suggested in this chapter.

Case study 1: Soknopaïou Nesos, the Fayum

Most prior research on Romano-Egyptian domestic contexts has taken place in Egypt's Fayum region ([Figure 10.1](#)). This region became a nexus for domestic studies due to the papyrological rescue missions led by Grenfell and Hunt in the early 1900s, which exposed numerous, well-preserved houses in the region (Grenfell *et al.* 1900). Because the primary objective of these missions was to salvage papyri, contextual and architectural data are lacking from their publications. In addition to Grenfell and Hunt's rescue missions, other excavations took place in the Fayum, although the robustness of this data varies considerably.

The University of Michigan excavated two of the most famous Fayum sites in the early twentieth century: Karanis (Kom Aushim) (1924–1934) and Soknopaïou Nesos (Dimé) (1931–1932). The material from these sites is invaluable for the present study since both sites produced a wealth of material data on domestic architecture and artifacts.

Although Karanis has become the type-site of Romano-Egyptian domestic architecture, there are two major caveats regarding this material that prohibit its employment in the present chapter (for additional critiques, see Davoli 1998, 73–116, Boozer 2015a). First, the Karanis houses have not been fully published. General reports on the stratigraphy, topography, and architecture were published in the 1930s, but these lacked full analyses of each structure and did not attempt to interpret the findings (Boak and Peterson 1931; Boak 1933). A subsequent report attempted to fill in the gaps left by these prior publications (Husselman 1979), but it also did not provide contextual explorations of the material and the accompanying maps and illustrations are often difficult to connect to particular structures and moments in time. We still do not have a full publication on the architectural layout of most of the Karanis houses. Moreover, only the largest and best-preserved houses were singled out for publication, which makes it difficult to discern the range of house types available at Karanis (Husselman 1979: 67–73). This practice obscures the most common and representative houses occupied by typical households at Karanis.

Second, the publications that do exist for Karanis houses analyzed

material categories rather than contexts (e.g., individual houses). Over 20 years ago, Peter van Minnen, a papyrologist, urged archaeologists to explore Karanis domestic material by context rather than by material category (1994). Unfortunately, this type of analysis has not been accomplished for more than a tiny portion of this site yet, and it is impossible to connect artifacts to the houses from which they came except by consultation of the excavation records in the Kelsey Museum. It is not possible to determine which types of objects, texts, and architectural features co-occurred with one another and what the distribution of house types, objects and texts looked like across the site.

The University of Michigan also excavated houses at Soknopaiou Nesos and, although the results of this mission were not fully published, the single published excavation report enables us to connect houses to the plans and at least some of the material mentioned in the report. Davoli provides an overview of this excavation as well as other archaeological research at Soknopaiou Nesos (Davoli 1998: 39–71). Only the coins, papyri, and specific architectural elements received attention in the single published excavation report (Boak *et al.* 1935). I will explore this site as the case study for the Fayum despite this drawback because the house and site plans are easier to interpret than those from Karanis.

There are well-understood hesitations in using archaeological data produced in the 1930s. The understanding of stratigraphy was basic and archaeologists gave little consideration to the find locus of material. Excavations were conducted at a rapid pace with relatively little recording occurring beyond architectural features and the corresponding finds. The reports produced on the archaeology, while the standard of the day, demonstrate simplistic understandings of site stratigraphy and lack detailed contextual information. Moreover, the houses were analyzed and published by category rather than as domestic units, thereby severing the finds from the houses from which they came.

For these reasons, the present chapter will primarily examine the houses by means of site plan, even though a holistic analysis is desirable and would considerably improve our ability to interpret space. These caveats aside, the opportunity for a macro-level approach to household archaeology at Soknopaiou Nesos, using the available site plans, is promising. Likewise, I hope that eventually it will be possible to extend this type of research to a more in-depth re-analysis of this and other previously excavated sites in the Fayum.

A group of four houses from the East Side of the Late First Level was chosen from Soknopaiou Nesos for this chapter as part of a pilot study

for several reasons (Figure 10.2). First, this group contains what is considered to be the most common house type of its stratum. Second there is little evidence of later construction on top of, or disturbance to, this *insula*. Third, the published plans make it easy to locate this *insula* within the settlement. Fourth, these houses, which the excavators date to the mid-third century CE, derive from the latest phase of houses at Soknopaïou Nesos and are closer in date to the other houses explored in the present study.

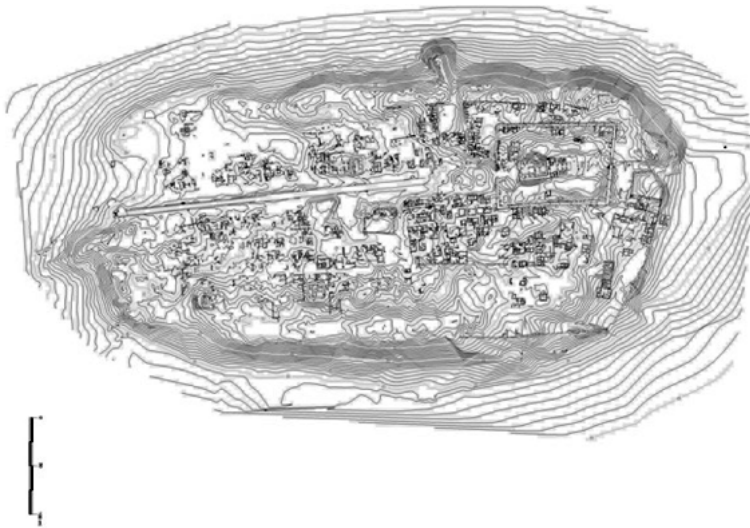


Figure 10.2 General Plan of Soknopaïou Nesos in Boak, A. E. R., *et al.* (1935). *Soknopaïou Nesos: The University of Michigan excavations at Dimê in 1931–32*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press. (Kelsey Museum of Archaeology).

This housing group is located on the eastern portion of the site, which is divided by a well-preserved dromos. The *insula* is composed of four houses with linear and clustered layouts. Three of the four buildings are attached by common walls and are surrounded by streets to the north, west and south and an unexcavated open area to the east. In total, this *insula* is made up of ten ground rooms, counting the exterior courtyard spaces. It should be kept in mind that we are missing the upper floors of these houses and that, originally, there would have been additional rooms.

The East Side Late First Level contained four houses (II 201; II 202; II 203; II 204) (Figure 10.3). These houses formed an irregular block or *insula* bounded on the north by a street and a narrow alley, on the east by a street or an open space, on the west by another street, and on the south by a passageway and the walls of an adjacent block of houses. To the north there was an additional domestic block beyond

the street. House II 202 appears to have been built into this street, which narrowed the 3–4 meter wide street into an alleyway (Boak *et al.* 1935: 5).

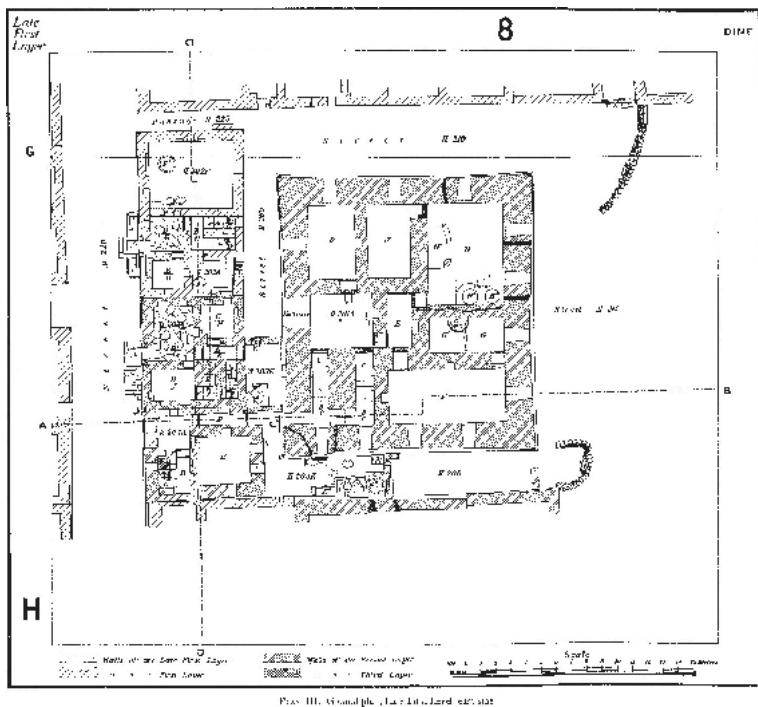


Figure 10.3 Plan III, Ground Plan, Late First Level, East Side in Boak, A.E.R. *et al* (1935). *Soknopaiou Nesos: The University of Michigan Excavations at Dimê in 1931–32*. (Kelsey Museum of Archaeology).

The street to the east of the *insula* had two approximately semicircular, unevenly constructed stone walls built into it (Boak *et al.* 1935: 6). These informal walls may have been wind and sand breaks to keep sand from encroaching upon the houses within the *insula* (Boozer 2016).

The short passageway (II 200) between House II 201 and the buildings to the south was between 2 and 3 meters wide. It had once served as an access route to the courtyard to the west (II 204 K), but the doorway had been bricked up. A narrow street (II 205) provided access between House II 201 and Street II 210, partially dividing the *insula* into eastern and western portions (Boak *et al.* 1935: 6).

A large house (II 201) occupied the eastern half of the *insula*. Only the walls of the ground floors were preserved up to the window sills, while the upper floors appear to have disappeared completely. Erosion or *sebakh* digging probably caused this damage. The northeast room,

H, was converted into a food preparation area, with a storage bin and baking ovens. In most of the rooms, the floor level had risen over time, which resulted in covering the air vents (*oculi*) of the underground chambers. The ceilings of these rooms had previously been broken through and the rooms themselves partly filled with rubbish and abandoned (Boak *et al.* 1935: 6).

The western half of the *insula* contained three smaller houses: II 202, II 203, II 204. All three houses fronted on to Street II 220, but the entrance of House II 204 was at a much lower level than those of the other houses, which were approached by flights of stone steps leading up from the street. Only the ground floors were preserved for all of these houses (Boak *et al.* 1935: 5–7, Plan III).

House II 201. House 201 differed from the other three houses in this *insula*, and indeed the other Michigan excavated houses at Soknopaïou Nesos and Karanis (Boak *et al.* 1935: 10–11). The house was roughly square in plan view, measuring 18.5×17 meters. The layout of House II 201 was different from the others in the *insula* in that it had a more clustered layout of the rooms, meaning that central rooms provided access to adjoining rooms. The entrance led to an anteroom (room A), which led to room D and E as well as the staircase leading both upstairs and downstairs to a basement. Room A and all of the doorways between room A and the rooms it communicated with were paneled with strips and blocks of well-cut wood. Room E provided access to three additional rooms in the structure and served as a key access point within the house (Boak *et al.* 1935: 11–12, Plan III, fig. 10). A staircase provided access to upper levels.

The outer walls of the ground floor were approximately 2 meters wide and were built of extremely large and well-made gray bricks. The exterior face bricks measured $29 \times 14 \times 11$ cm and the interior face bricks measured $30 \times 15 \times 11$ cm. The bricks on the interior and exterior faces were laid in alternate courses of headers and stretchers, while the interior courses were laid as headers only. This method was not consistent and the wall width diminished with the wall height. The outer faces of the house walls were decorated with rows of wooden blocks set transversely into the walls at regular intervals. The squared ends of these blocks were flush with the surface of the walls. The southeast corner of the house was protected by a wooden beam set vertically at the juncture of the two walls. It is possible that this decorative design was carried out along the full original wall height and was present along all four corners. These wooden blocks strengthened the walls, potentially absorbed excess moisture from the bricks, and also provided decoration, which is not found in the

neighboring houses (Boak *et al.* 1935: 11, Plan XVI, fig. 8. See also, Kemp 2000 on mud brick architecture.). The clustered plan, wood beams, and elaborate architectural treatment suggest a generally more expensive structure, in terms of size, design, and material used.

House II 202. This house had a clear linear progression of rooms. A staircase provided access to upper storeys. Doorways were blocked due to the rise of ground levels outside (e.g., II 202 F), and the abandonment of some underground rooms (e.g., rooms below II 202 F), suggesting that these houses had continued in use as the ground level rose (Boak *et al.* 1935: 6–7). House II 202 lacked a courtyard, which is noteworthy because it entails that the house may have been dependent upon another house or a shared cooking area (not evident in this plan) between houses for cooking. In addition to this difference in layout, House II 202 had other distinctive features, such as stone pavements in room D, which was also found in House II 203 (Boak *et al.* 1935, 6). House II 202 had a wall painting on the east wall of room D of a horse and rider, which was most likely a representation of the rider god Heron (Boak *et al.* 1935: 9, fig. 4). The University of Michigan excavated a similar depiction of Heron at Karanis (Boak and Peterson 1931: 34, fig. 49).

House II 203. House II 203 had a stone pavement in room A and was entered by means of a flight of steps leading from the street into room A (Boak *et al.* 1935: 6, Plan III). There were three ground story rooms, a passageway, and a staircase. This staircase would have provided access to additional rooms. A courtyard space was located in the alleyway behind House II 2003 (K), which suggests that public space was co-opted by this house. The progression between rooms was linear.

House II 204. The entrance of House II 204 was lower than those of other two houses along this side of the *insula* (Boak *et al.* 1935: 6). On the basis of these stairs, this house may be older than the others surrounding it. Alternatively, it may have been compensating for an unlevelled site surface. There were two ground story rooms, two passageways, and a staircase. Passageway D provided access to an L-shaped courtyard space (II 204 K) that was built into what had originally been a street, which serves as another example of co-opting public space within this *insula*. The progression between rooms indicates a linear rather than a clustered plan.

House II 204 had a painting on the north wall of the narrow passage D. The scene appears to depict the owner of the house and his wife making an offering to the god Soknopaios, who was surrounded by symbolic paraphernalia connected to his worship. If this interpretation is correct, this house may contain crucial evidence for a domestic cult

of the crocodile god (Boak *et al.* 1935: 9–10, fig. 6).

Table 10.3 Soknopaïou Nesos Late First Level East Side (abandoned in mid-third century CE).

Building techniques and materials	Mud brick Stone pavements and steps in two houses (II 202, II 203) Religious wall paintings in two houses (II 202, II 204) House II 201 had more substantial walls than the other houses House II 201 had select wooden decorated paneling
Building size	House II 201: 17 × 18.5 House II 201 (internal courtyard H): 5 × 6.5 m House II 202: 7 × 6.5 m House II 202 (courtyard F): 7 × 6 m House II 203: 7 × 7 meters House II 203 (courtyard K): 5.5 × 2.25 m House II 204: 8 × 6 m House II 204 (courtyard K): 7 × 3.5 – 5.5 m
Orientation	Entrances found on west
Courtyard location	External, behind house: 1 External, built into alleys: 2 Internal: 1
Space syntax	Linear: 3 Cluster: 1
Location in the settlement	East of paved dromos leading towards the temple to the north
Relations with other buildings	Houses 202–3 share party walls <i>Insula</i> built with other <i>insulae</i> surrounding Abandoned area to east
Uniformity in architectural layout	Three eastern houses fairly uniform in layout and dimensions. Western house different in layout and dimensions (significantly larger and with cluster plan and internal kitchen)

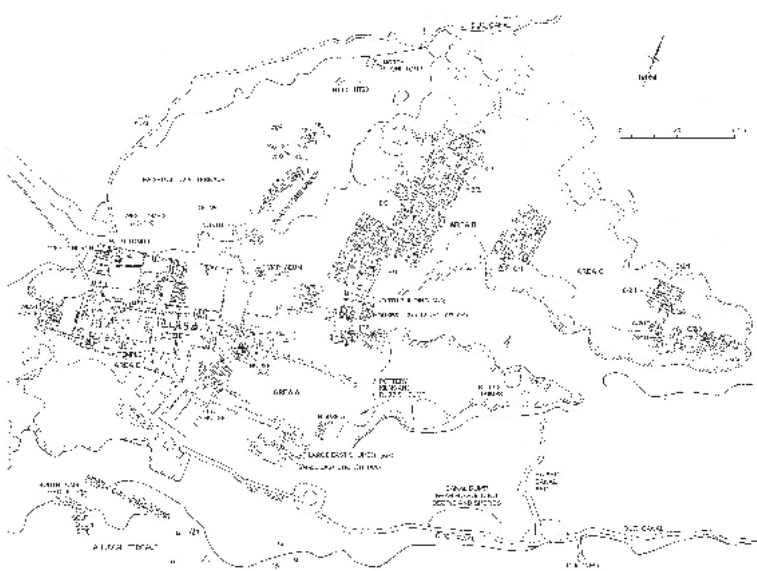


Figure 10.5 General Plan of Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab). (C. A. Hope).

The Area A structures are separated by streets on the south and west from other houses (Figure 10.6). Doors provide access to Houses 1 and 2 only to the south, while House 3 has a south entrance and a second entrance on the north, which provides access to an apparently vacant enclosure. House 3 is the largest of the three houses. House 3 appears to have been constructed first, followed by Structure 4 and then Houses 1 and 2 simultaneously. In their final state, Houses 1 and 2 formed two interlocking L-shaped units. It is likely that the entire development was constructed within a short time span (Hope 1988: 167).

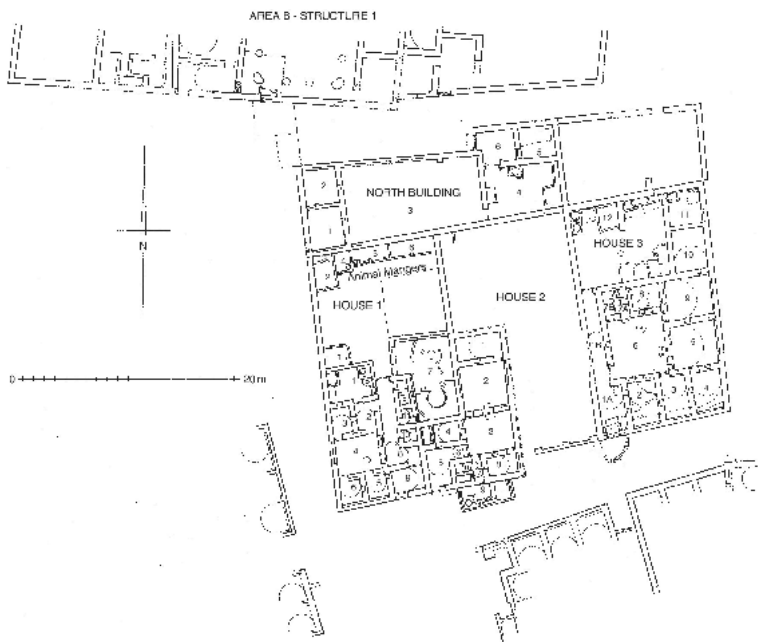


Figure 10.6 Plan of Houses 1–3 and Structure 4 (labeled as North Building 3 on this plan) from Area A at Kellis (Ismant el-Kharab). (C. A. Hope).

House 1. House 1 has a clustered plan with a north-south corridor providing access to all other rooms except for one and the entrance. Room 1 appears to have been the primary cooking area within the house. This room appears to have been added after the initial occupation of the structure. The courtyard is located at the rear of the property and seems to have been encroached upon when additional rooms were added to House 1 (Hope 1988: 167).

House 2. House 2 contains eight rooms; to its north and east is an open courtyard, access to which is gained by a door in its south wall and not directly from the house. A lightly constructed cooking area, room 9, was a later addition to the house and which encroaches upon the street. All rooms, except for rooms 2, 3, and 9, were barrel vaulted (Hope 1988: 169).

House 3. An entrance corridor provides access to a central room (room 6) off of which eight other rooms open. This corridor also provides access to a courtyard containing animal mangers, storage, and cooking facilities (Hope 1995: 142; Hope *et al.* 1989: 1). Unlike the other houses (Houses 1 and 2), the entrance into House 3 was down a short flight of mud-brick steps. The stairs were a late addition built to compensate for rising surface levels outside of the house (Hope *et al.* 1989: 3). A deed was found among the goods recovered

from this house. The deed describes the House 2 neighbor transferring ownership of part of the house complex to one of the House 3 residents, who also appears to be a partial owner of House 2 (Hope 1995: 143). This deed would suggest close ties between these two houses and, potentially, a familial link between the two structures (see above). It may also indicate an endeavor to recombine the virtual house fractions that could occur during inheritance (see above).

Structure 4. The exact function of Structure 4 is uncertain, although it appears to have been of a domestic nature. It is entered from the street to the north, but once opened to the street to the west (later blocked). North-facing doorways were preferred in houses, so this change in doorway location may betray a potential change in status (Daniel 2010). Alternatively, the change could have been motivated by accessibility reasons. Room 4 served as a food preparation area. The structure was reused as a dump.

Table 10.4 Kellis: Late third-fourth century CE.

Building techniques and materials	House 1: mud brick, vaults, flat roofs. House 2: mud brick, vaults, flat roofs. House 3: mud brick, vaults, open inner courtyard, possible flat roof. Structure 4: mud brick, possible courtyard, flat roofs
Building size	House 1: 10 × 16 m (at greatest extents) House 1 courtyard: 16 × 10 m (at greatest extent) House 2: 10 × 15 m (at greatest extents) House 2 courtyard: 22 × 15 m (at greatest extents) House 3: 13 × 14 m with 7.5 × 4 m additional rooms to north. House 3 courtyard: 7.5 × 8.5 m Structure 4: 23 × 8 m (at greatest extent)
Orientation	3 houses open to south House 3 has an additional northern entrance Structure 4 entered from the north (initially west)
Courtyard location	House 1: rear

	House 2: L-shape around house. House 3: rear Structure 4: unclear, central room (?)
Space syntax	Linear: 2 Cluster: 2 (House 1 has a clustered plan with linear elements)
Location in the settlement	South-central part of settlement Located close to high status houses and temples
Relations with other buildings	House 3 built first Structure 4 built second Houses 1 and 2 built contemporaneously Houses share party walls <i>Insula</i> built with other domestic areas surrounding it
Uniformity in architectural layout	Uniform features Layout not uniform between houses

Case study 3: Trimithis, Dakhleh Oasis

Our third case study is also located in the Dakhleh Oasis, in the extreme western portion of this oasis (Figure 10.4). Excavation at Trimithis (Amheida) began in 2004, under the direction of Roger Bagnall. To date, there are only two fully excavated houses from this site. Both houses were explored using modern archaeological techniques. The excavation report for one house (B2) has been published (Boozer 2015b). There are preliminary publications on the other house (B1) (e.g. Boozer 2010) and a final excavation report is planned.

Unlike the houses in the prior case studies, these houses are located in separate *insulae* at Trimithis, which creates interpretive obstacles for the present chapter (Figure 10.7). This obstacle can be somewhat mitigated by the exceptional preservation of walls at Trimithis, which have been mapped, and reveal the site plan clearly. Further excavation continues in the vicinity of both houses discussed here, which will add considerable detail to the suggestions put forth below about intra-site

organization. These excavations also will complicate or verify assumptions made based upon the extant site plan, which was based upon surface mapping.

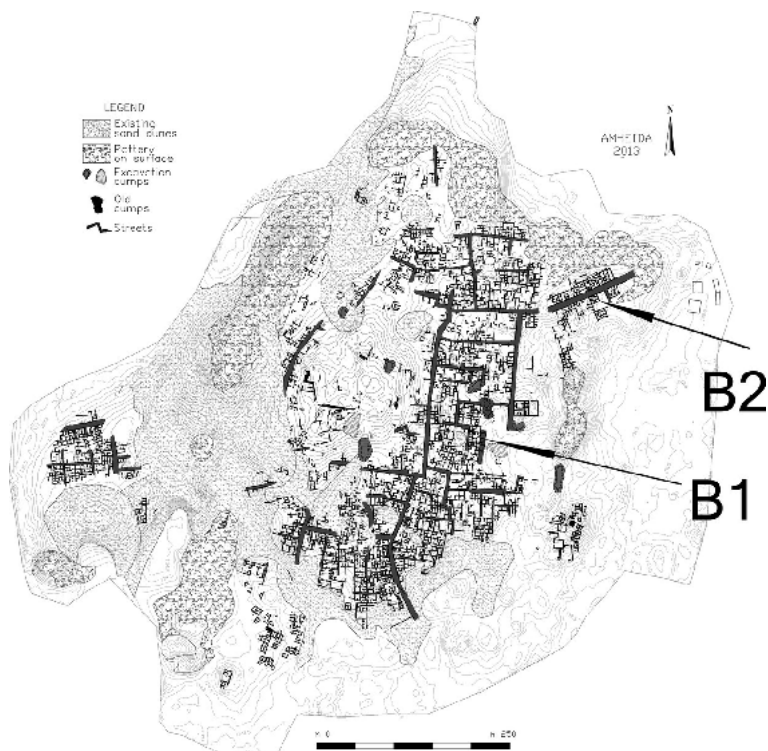


Figure 10.7 General Plan of Trimithis (Amheida). (Amheida Project).

A second difficulty with the Trimithis houses is that they derive from different periods of the city's history. House B2 dates somewhat earlier than House B1, although they may have overlapped in their occupational histories for a brief period in the early fourth century CE (for dating House B1 on the basis of the ostraka, see Bagnall and Ruffini 2012). As diachronic change in Romano-Egyptian house forms is little understood, it is not possible to mitigate against this comparative drawback.

B1. House B1 is located in a central area of Trimithis and is surrounded by structures that appear to have complicated room layouts. The surface material in this area of the site is of fine quality, suggesting elite occupation. This area of the site appears to have had a long period of occupation as B1 was built on top of a bathhouse, which likely dates to the late second through third century CE (Boozer 2014, Davoli, Forthcoming, for preliminary reports, see www.amheida.org).

B1 has a clustered plan of access and two entrances (R7, R12) into the

house (Figure 10.8). One entrance opens to the east and is located within close proximity to two rooms used for cooking. One entrance (R7) provided access to most of these functional areas of B1. The other entrance (R12) opens to the west and was located near a decoratively painted room. A painted, domed room (R1) provided access to additional painted rooms. A staircase provided access to the roof, which had a flat area built on top of the vaulted, domed, and flat roofs below. This roof could have been used as an additional, open living space.

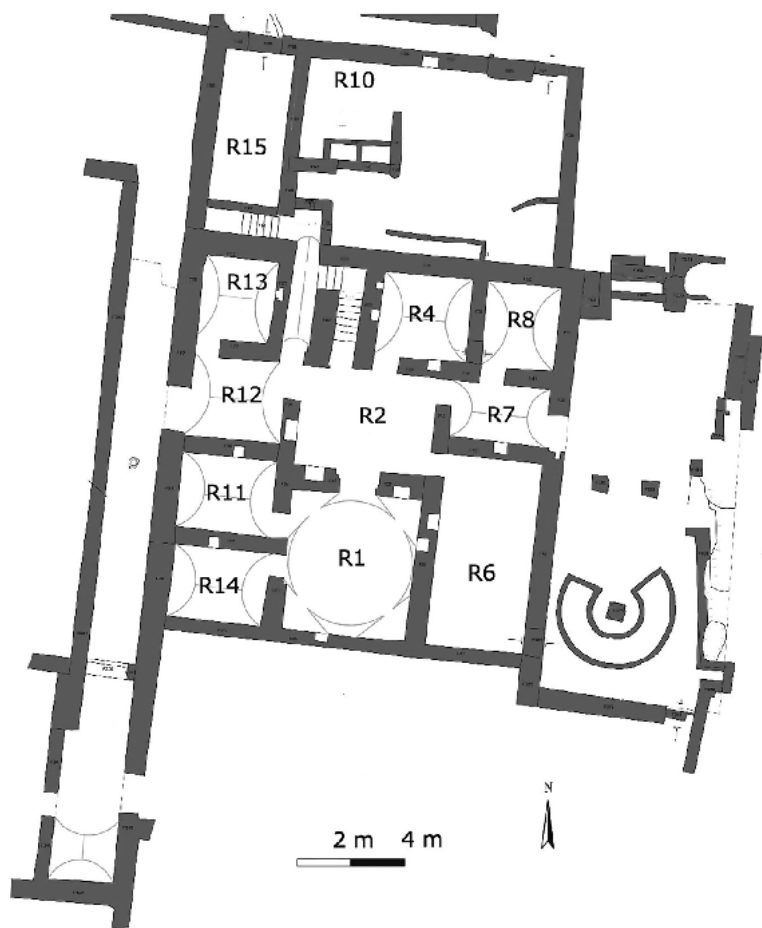


Figure 10.8 House B1 from Area 2 at Trimithis (Amheida). (Amheida Project).

The B1 house was somewhat modified over time with blockages created between rooms and some rooms being converted from decorative rooms to more functional rooms, potentially in response to changed economic circumstances or what may have been damage to the walls created by an earthquake (Boozer 2010, 2011).

B2. House B2 is located in the northeastern area of Trimithis along a major thoroughfare leading into the city. The entire neighborhood appears to have been laid out in a single episode of construction. Deep sondages in the area have suggested that there was no occupation on this area of the site prior to the construction of this neighborhood. House B2 itself seems to have been occupied from the mid-late third century until the early to early-mid-fourth century CE, on the basis of the architecture, ceramics, and ostraka recovered during excavation.

A single entrance (R9), which opens onto the road to the north, provided access to House B2 ([Figure 10.9](#)). Once again, north-facing entrances were preferred, so this entrance may suggest status distinctions (Daniel 2010). B2 has a clustered plan of organization, which focused upon a large open or very lightly roofed central room (R7). A staircase (R8) provided access between this room and the roof over the barrel vaulted and flat roof(s) of House B2, which would have been used as additional living and work space.

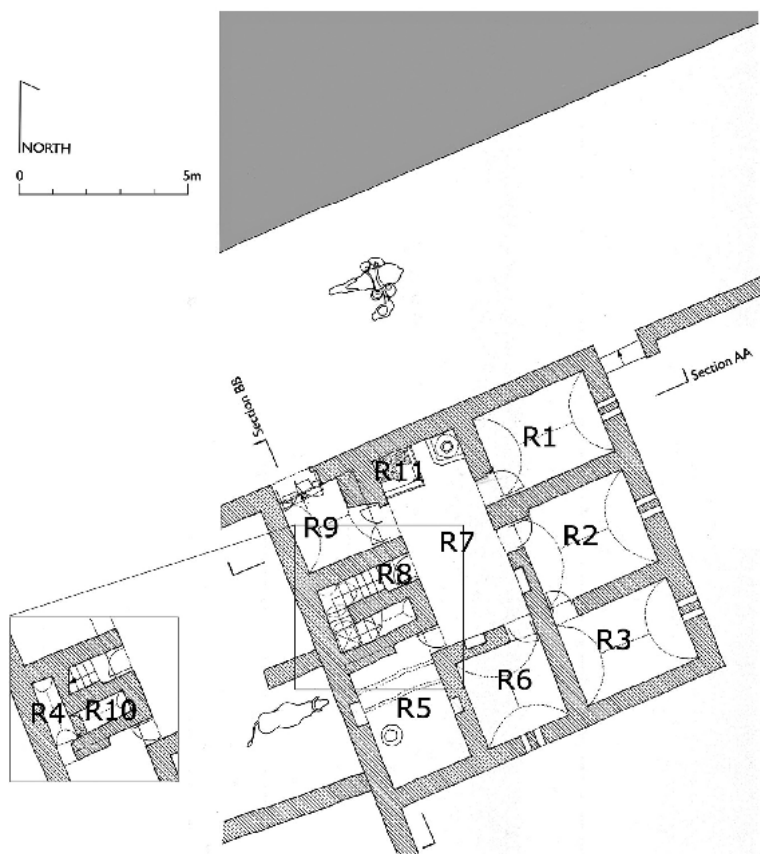


Figure 10.9 House B2 from Area 1 at Trimithis (Amheida). (N. Warner).

A large courtyard (C2) is located behind the house and could only be entered by means of a house north of C2 and east of B2. The City University of New York Excavations at Amheida are currently excavating C2 and plan to excavate the house east of B2. B2 contains provisioning for cooking in two rooms of the house and does not seem to have had its own exterior courtyard. The bread oven in one room was added shortly after the house was occupied. It is possible that occupants originally used communal bread ovens before they moved their cooking area indoors (Boozer 2012, 2015b). This alteration may indicate that access to public spaces changed during the occupation of House B2, which is a practice attested in the papyri (see above). This conjecture cannot be verified archaeologically at this time.

Table 10.5 Trimithis: Houses B1 and B2 (mid-late third to late fourth century CE).

Building techniques and materials	Mud brick Vaulted roofs Flat roofs B1: baked brick elements B1: wall paintings B2: colored plaster (no figurative paintings)
Building size	B1: 15 × 15 m B2: 11 × 11 m
Orientation	B1: two entrances to east and west B2: one entrance to north
Courtyard location	B1 exterior courtyard to north; cooking facilities in house B2 no exterior courtyard; cooking facilities in house
Space syntax	Cluster: 2
Location in the settlement	B1: central area of site, elaborate architecture, fine material goods B2: peripheral area of site, simple architecture, functional goods
Relations with other buildings	B1: shares party walls with identical house to south B1: part of what appears to be a planned <i>insula</i> B2: shares party walls with house to west B2: part of what appears to be a planned <i>insula</i>
Uniformity in architectural layout	Similar features and layout

Discussion

The preceding three case studies provide several notable points of comparison between them (See [Table 10.6](#) for the below discussion). Soknopaïou Nesos (Houses II 202–204) shows the most contrast between the houses in the *insula* explored, as three of the four houses are similar and one of the four (House II 201) is significantly larger and more decoratively elaborate.

Kellis has two out of four similar houses in its *insula*. One house (Structure 4) is smaller than the others and another house (House 3) is larger and more complex than the others. The likeness between the similar houses at Kellis is less substantial than those at Soknopaïou Nesos and the contrast in houses is also less significant than at Soknopaïou Nesos.

The Trimithis houses are somewhat problematic for this comparison between sites since they are physically and temporally separated in a way not demonstrated in the other two case studies. Even so, it is notable that the architectural forms between the two houses are similar, although one house (B1) is larger and significantly more opulent than the other house (B2).

Table 10.6 Comparisons across sites: Individual houses.

Size	<i>Soknopaïou Nesos</i> : 3 houses similar; 1 significantly larger. <i>Kellis</i> : 2 similar; 1 smaller; 1 larger. <i>Trimithis</i> : 1 larger; 1 smaller.
Complexity and Syntax	<i>Soknopaïou Nesos</i> : 3 houses similar and linear; 1 more complex and clustered. <i>Kellis</i> : 4 subtle variations; 1 with two entrances. <i>Trimithis</i> : Both clustered; 1 with two entrances.
Uniformity in architectural layout	<i>Soknopaïou Nesos</i> : Uniform with 1 exception. <i>Kellis</i> : Variable. <i>Trimithis</i> : Uniform, although status distinctions evident.

The intra-site relationships are notable when these three sites are compared ([Table 10.7](#)). The Soknopaïou Nesos *insula* had strong autonomous house units and there was also clear social ranking. The inbuilding evident in the

streets and alleys suggests that there were strong peer group links between households and that civic control over the area was insignificant.

At Kellis, we also find strong autonomous house units and a more subtle sense of social ranking with House 3 appearing to be somewhat higher in rank and Structure 4 lower in rank. The inbuilding and spatial negotiations between houses suggest strong links between households and that such spatial negotiations were not controlled by the city councilors.

Like the other two sites, the Trimithis houses are strongly autonomous. The uniformity in layout suggests shared social organization. The lack of inbuilding in the street in the vicinity of B2 suggests strong civic control in this area of the site, whereas there appears to have been less civic control regarding inbuilding in the B1 vicinity. This disparity in civic control may be related to the temporal gap between these two houses, or to the location of the houses within the city. For example, it may have been important to keep the street in front of B2 clear because it was a wide street on the edge of the city and could have been important for the movement of goods into and out of the city.

Table 10.7 Comparisons across sites: Intra-site analysis.

Soknopaiou Nesos	Strong autonomous units of houses with clear social ranking. Likely links across peer groups, due to uniformity. Likely peer group links due to inbuilding.
Kellis	Autonomous units of houses. Suggestive social ranking. Inbuilding suggests strong links between houses and less civic control.
Trimithis	Strong autonomous units of houses. Uniformity suggests shared social organization. Lack of inbuilding for B2 suggests strong civic control and possibly fewer community links. Inbuilding in B1 vicinity suggests lack of civic control and some community links.

Conclusions

The results of these three case studies are preliminary, but they provide

insight into three different components of domestic organization in Roman Egypt: (1) individual house type variables, (2) types of *insulae*, and (3) patterns of socioeconomic organization. This analysis demonstrates that we gain substantially more comparative information about households and the relationships between them when we examine both the single house and its surroundings.

First, we can identify three variables that occurred within the houses examined in the above case studies:

1. cooking inside/outside
2. cluster/linear plan
3. one/two entrances.

These variables have significant implications for household structures. For example, the relocation of food preparation spaces may indicate shifts in family practices since women (and presumably children) would have spent considerably more time indoors when food preparations moved inside the house. The location of cooking spaces inside would have drawn individual households more closely together. External cooking spaces, particularly communal ones, would have encouraged links between households. Likewise, a clustered house plan integrates household dynamics significantly more than does a linear plan. Household members would pass through central cluster points frequently throughout the day, thereby fostering more interaction with one another. The presence of multiple entrances may point towards a bifurcation in access, potentially suggesting a higher status and a lower status access point. For example, House B1 at Trimithis has one entrance in close proximity to lavishly decorated rooms, while the other is in close proximity to food preparation areas.

Second, this preliminary study has revealed two types of *insulae*:

1. tightly clustered *insulae* with well-defined perimeters/strongly clustered *insulae* with poorly defined perimeters;
2. *insulae* with similarly sized houses/*insulae* with one larger house.

Tightly clustered *insulae* with clearly defined perimeters may have had stronger social cohesion between structures than *insulae* that were less clearly defined. The living conditions in *insulae* with similarly sized houses would have been comparable, which would have promoted strong peer ties. The occupants of the larger house would have had different living conditions from their neighbors. Vertical ties between the occupants of these houses would have been less secure than the horizontal ties among the occupants of small houses. Soknopaiou Nesos demonstrates the clearest possibility of close peer groups among three of the houses examined. The fourth house (House II 201) may have had weak vertical ties with the other houses. The Kellis houses are

fairly comparable in size, which suggests strong peer ties. It is more difficult to assess the Amheida houses, but both B1 and B2 seem to fit within the spectrum of houses from their respective neighborhoods.

Third, by taking all of the analyses into consideration, three patterns of social and economic organization emerge:

1. *Organic communities with accessible or co-opted public spaces*: This pattern indicates the presence of a strongly interrelated and interdependent social group. Clusters of autonomous units of houses with various designs and co-options of space indicate the presence of close relationships between households or extended family relationships as parts of houses and streets are exchanged between neighbors due to inheritance, marriage, or sales. The relationship between the Kellis houses examined appear to fit this model. The three similar houses at Soknopaiou Nesos (Houses II 202–204) also demonstrate organic growth and the co-option of public space.
2. *Planned communities with co-opted street space*: These forms may indicate small nuclear families with similar socioeconomic status within a close-knit community. The negotiation of space would suggest patterns of social and economic negotiation between houses. The neighborhood around Amheida House B1 appears to fit this model.
3. *Pre-planned settlements with regimented organizations of space*: This pattern suggests that the negotiations between houses occurred less frequently than is found in the other two forms. Rather, central authorities may have controlled processes such as inbuilding in streets and so forth. Households that did not buy or sell physical parts of houses may have viewed themselves more as discrete units than as part of a holistic neighborhood. Amheida House B2 may fit this model.

This preliminary analysis suggests that households within a pre-planned settlement and with private courtyards and regimented uses of space would have had fewer links with neighboring households than households with communal courtyards and/or co-opted space. When viewed from the perspective of architectural layout, it seems there would be little to connect pre-planned settlements with regimented organizations of space. On the other hand, houses that build into one another as well as civic space would have much more to connect them socially, physically, and economically.

At this stage it is not possible to determine if these physical patterns reflect social realities. This preliminary study suggests that there is enormous future potential for further research upon this topic and that future work would contribute to our growing understanding of households in Roman Egypt. There are two clear avenues for future research. First, it would be insightful to conduct large-scale analyses of Soknopaiou Nesos and Karanis, due to the significant quantities of readily available site plans for these two sites. The

results of such a study would enable a broad understanding of patterns across each of these sites.

Second, it would be useful to take a keyhole approach to this topic and employ a broad suite of data from sites with a modern standard of excavation, such as Trimithis or Kellis. Material culture can be used to show links as well as boundaries between ethnic groups as well as other social categories. Material culture plays a particularly important role in manifesting boundaries at times when groups want to make their social boundaries more clear (Frankel 2003; Hodder 1977,1985; Lightfoot and Martinez 1995; Lightfoot *et al.* 1998). Ongoing research at Trimithis suggests that this approach is worthwhile and we hope to be able to reconstruct household dynamics with greater conviction when more houses are unearthed.

Although it is unfortunate that it is not possible to add material culture studies to explorations of Soknopaiou Nesos and Karanis at this time, all is not lost. Both sites are being re-examined currently and we have every reason to believe that we will be able to incorporate contextual analyses into future analyses of households. In the meantime, the present study has provided one way forward for employing this antiquated data for current research questions as well as demonstrating how past data and current data can be combined usefully.

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Age Hierarchy and Social Networks among Urban Women in the Roman East

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This chapter focuses on the roles and functions of older and younger women around the first and second centuries CE in the cities of the Eastern Roman Empire, comparing select early Christian texts with comparable ancient data and modern analogies.¹ This evidence suggests that the relationship between older and younger women was an integral part of the ancient Roman female life course in the East, shedding light on extended family relationships among women both within and outside of the household. These were notably hierarchical relationships. Whereas younger women were expected to be deferential and to fulfill their filial duty, older women exerted social power and influence over the behavior and activities of younger women. But older women were also expected to model virtuous behavior, teach, guide, and correct younger women, as well as provide matchmaking services and patronage for them.

Early Christian Texts

By the end of the first century, the early Christian movement in the Roman East was growing, but not without its internal as well as external conflict. Rival teachings within the group were causing social tensions, and their reputation within larger society was in question. Two New Testament letters written perhaps in the late first century, known as 1 Timothy (1 Tim) and Titus (Tit),² suggest that conforming to familial norms of Roman society would help to make the movement less of a target for social sanction.³ When viewed from a social perspective, these early Christian texts reflect realities and/or expectations for relationships in the Roman household in Asia Minor.⁴ For the author of 1 Timothy, embracing proper conduct that reflected the roles of the household befitted the members of the community as the metaphorical “household of God” (*oikos theou*; 1 Tim 3:15; Verner 1983; Bush 1990, 156; Zamfir 2014). In the author’s conception, proper behavior would promote unity and honorable reputation. The author’s ideals reflect something of the

cultural norms and expectations of Roman non-elite family relations, including what he considers respectable social dynamics among women.⁵

The description of the community as the “household of God” suggests that for this author, early Christian communities functioned (or at least should function) as fictive kin groups (Aasgaard 2004; Balla 2003). This rhetoric reflects social interactions between people who were *not*, on the whole, biologically related but who experienced relationships that *resembled* biological kin. As the rhetorical recipient of the letter, Timothy is told, “Do not rebuke an older man but be conciliatory with him as a father, young men as brothers, older women as mothers, young women as sisters, in all purity” (1 Tim 5:1–2).⁶ In essence, members were to treat one another as if they were family members, with conduct appropriate for public display (LaFosse 2011: 219–40). In two case studies, Geoffrey Nathan observes a similar function of metaphorical language used for extended family in fourth-century southern Gaul and Antioch. Words for nuclear family relationships were used to identify the function and/or tenor of one’s relationships to extended kin in “age appropriate” ways. Such relations were appropriate substitutes when key members of one’s family had passed away (this volume, [Chapter 13](#), p. 255).⁷ By extension, 1 Timothy portrays a community functioning on the analogy of the household including fulfilling responsibilities and obligations that were expected for biological kin.⁸

In Titus 2:2–10, the author directs five distinct groups of people found in a typical household: older men, older women, younger women, younger men, and slaves. Except for slaves (whose gender and age were not relevant to their social status), gender and age were important social identity markers.⁹ Specific demeanor was expected and encouraged for those in each category in order to promote “healthy teaching” (2:1) and combat discordant people in the community (1:11, 3:10). Alongside older men (2:2) and younger men (2:6), older women were to be addressed directly (2:3). However, the young women were to be addressed only indirectly, as pupils of the older women:

Older women [are to be] reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine, teachers of what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to be those who love [their] husbands, those who love children, those who are self-controlled, pure, good household managers, those who submit to their own husbands, so that the word of God might not be blasphemed.

Older women appear to have significant roles connected to their relative age and social standing. It is notable that older women fall into one of two categories: either they are models and teachers of good behavior, or they are gossips and drunkards. These dual features of older women are common in the Roman literature (Cockayne 2003: 134, 145; Parkin 2003: 86). In the Roman male mind, female sexuality, properly tied to reproduction, linked

these dual stereotypes.¹⁰ The proper role for an older woman continued her motherly role, namely care for and guidance of younger generations. Older women were prone to negative sentiment (“old wives’ tales,” 1 Tim 4:7), but could also be revered matrons.¹¹

The author of Titus wanted to correct behavior that could hinder the group’s reputation.¹² He trusted that the correction would occur within women’s circles because of the cultural norm of age hierarchy among women. Older women, by virtue of their age and experience, would be in a position to offer advice and guidance to their younger counterparts. The nature and function of this age hierarchy depends at least in part on the role of the older women, whether mothers (Quinn 1990: 130, 134), mothers-in-law (Verner 1983: 171), other female kin, or mostly fictive kin.

Employing Analogies for Women’s Worlds

One way to help us ponder age hierarchy among women in early Christian communities of the Roman East is to compare observations of social interaction in analogous sources, such as papyri from Roman Egypt and comparable material from modern, traditional cultures. Comparative material helps us examine the early Christian sources more closely for clues about women’s experience, providing a framework for considering similar cultural values, ideals and realities that may otherwise remain obscure to the modern Western reader, especially when it comes to women whose lives and identities are usually filtered through the perspectives of male authors.¹³

From a modern perspective an imbalance of power in patriarchal societies, like those in the Roman East, often stifles, or at least limits, women’s choices, but comparative evidence (Abu-Lughod 1990; Fallers and Fallers 1976; Kenyon 1991) suggests that women likely found avenues of expression and fulfillment that functioned within another sphere, a community of women that operated concurrently with expected male ideals. In her observation of urban Sudanese women in the 1970s, Susan M. Kenyon finds that “women do not want to become more like men or more like Western women. They are changing within their own well-defined world, creating more space and freedom for themselves but within limits that they, no less than men, protect” (1991: 227).¹⁴ While restricted in certain ways by patriarchy, women create community, resources and support within “women’s worlds.”¹⁵ Their behaviors and roles are dictated by different ages and stages of the life course as they function within their own sphere, largely apart from men. This is suggestive for women’s experiences in the ancient Roman East.

If a Roman woman’s life course depended largely on which older women (mother, mother-in-law, or others) were most prominent in her life at

marriage, then post-marital residence affected the kind of hierarchical relationships that developed among women (Brown, Subbaiah, and Sarah: 1998).

Generally speaking, the most common post-marital residence pattern in the Roman world was patrilocal (Treggiari 1991: 33; Huebner 2013: 142–51). Typically, a young bride resided with her husband’s family, apart from her natal family, and functioned under the authority of her mother-in-law. By virtue of her age and experience, the mother-in-law would have had authority over her as the most influential older woman in a young bride’s life. Such a relationship was often fraught with tension or conflict, but the daughter-in-law’s behavior was subject to censure by other women in the community (especially through gossip).¹⁶ If mothers have power in choosing their daughters-in-law, this may promote less conflict (Kenyon 1991: 23; cf. Huebner 2013: 155–60). The mother-in-law was a powerful figure, who is entitled to have the young new bride take on the grunt jobs of the home (Huebner 2013: 155–6).¹⁷ When the young wife bore children, especially a son, her status was elevated. She spent time raising and educating the children. When her children became adults, she yielded influence over their decisions. If she had sons who reached adulthood, when her son married, she becomes a mother-in-law and grandmother.¹⁸ As she aged and her older female kin passed away, her social power increased, especially in the context of her household.

Urbanization altered patterns of marital residence. On the basis of her work with census material from Roman Egypt, Sabine Huebner suggests that in rural areas patrilocal residency was the norm, but particularly among urban workers, married couples in cities tended toward neolocal residence and simple family households. These patterns are correlated with economic considerations, since in the city there was neither the need for labor nor the space to house multiple families together in one residence (this volume, [Chapter 9](#); cf. Treggiari 1991: 33, 378, 410; Dixon 1988: 170, 217). An urban setting would also allow women to be in closer proximity to their maternal kin.

Evidence from Roman Egypt suggests that mothers and their married daughters were in regular contact.¹⁹ In a first century letter from Roman Egypt, a soldier reports to his mother that he has a new-born son and requests to hear if his sister has had her baby. He specifies various instructions and greetings to family members, most notably his sisters and their families (*P.Mich.* 3.203; Rowlandson 1998: 93–4).

Letters from the archive of Apollonios (early second century CE, Egypt) contain useful glimpses of familial relationships among women, including conflict and obligation.²⁰ Apollonios’ mother Eudaimonis writes to Aline, her daughter-in-law, calling her “daughter” (*P.Brem.* 63²¹; *P.Giss.* 23).²² Tension is detectable near the end of one letter: “For what purpose did you send me

the 20 drachmas, when I am having a difficult time? Already I have before my eyes the notion that I shall be naked throughout the winter” (*P.Brem.* 63).²³ Earlier in the letter, Eudaimonis indicates she found it difficult to find workers to help with a clothing-related project that Aline’s slave women are working on. Perhaps Eudaimonis is chastising Aline for sending the extra money because it exerts undue pressure on her. She adds a postscript saying: “The wife of Eudemos does not leave my side and I am grateful to her.”²⁴ This may be an unrelated additional thought (abrupt changes in topic appear throughout the letter), or it may be a subtle way of contrasting Aline’s absence with Eudemos’ wife’s devotion (Eudemos’ identity is unknown).

Eudaimonis is given charge of her eldest granddaughter’s education while Apollonius and Aline are away (*P.Brem.* 63; *P.Giss.* 21, 23). She inquires about whether Aline has given birth and reports that her sister Souerous (probably Apollonios’ sister) has delivered a child (*P.Brem.* 63; cf. *P.Brem.* 64).²⁵ These reports suggest that the women of the family are in close contact, with Eudaimonis involved with her daughter’s family as well as her son’s.

Other female relationships are important in the family as well. First, Eudaimonis highlights involvement with her own natal kin when she indicates that at the wedding of her brother’s wife’s son she will reciprocate the wedding gift given at her son’s wedding (*P.Flor.* 3.32). Second, Aline writes a short, business-like letter to Tetes, a woman she calls “mother” (*P.Giss.* 78), who is likely a servant or slave of the family (Rowlandson 1998: 122; Bagnall and Criboire 2006: 161). If “mother” is a fictive kin term here, this may be an example of an older woman whose continuing relationship began when Aline was young.²⁶

These letters represent at least a temporary neolocal arrangement since Aline and Apollonios are living apart from Eudaimonis. However, the letters addressed to them, the fact that their daughter is living with Eudaimonis, and the indications of various relationships, obligations and connections between women in this archive give us an image of female networks within a generally patrilocal situation. In this case, daughters and daughters-in-law were both part of older women’s lives.²⁷ Thus, the evidence from Roman Egypt suggests that even if their marital home was neolocal, urban women continued to be influenced by both their husband’s female kin and their own (cf. Dixon 1988: 193, 212, 217). This is suggestive for the Roman East.

Whether or not a woman had *consistent access* to her natal family would have depended on post-martial residence. However, in an urban setting, it would not have been the setup of the household per se that make the difference as much as *spatial and social access* to other women in the community. Huebner describes an important facet of women’s lives in urban Roman Egypt: the architecture of urban houses suggests that meals – women’s work – were prepared in a common courtyard (Huebner, this volume, [Chapter 9](#), pp. 159, 169). The women who gathered in the courtyard to prepare food together

might have been kin or unrelated neighbors, but may have *functioned* as extended family.

Kenyon's fieldwork in 1970s central Sudan provides further useful comparative data as she observes a community in which rural patrilocal marriage patterns were being adapted to a new urban environment (Kenyon 1991, 1998). The way that age hierarchy among women functions in this setting provides a possible framework for considering the ancient evidence in growing cities of the Eastern Roman Empire.

In rural villages in Sudan, traditional patrilocal marriage in which a young bride lives under her mother-in-law's authority has been the norm. In the urban setting of the 1970s, young couples increasingly reside in their own homes, or their own share of the home (Kenyon 1998: 16). In this case, post-marital residence is neolocal, but in essence matrilineal: the bride lives close to her mother and other female kin on whom she depends (Kenyon 1998, 19). In addition, networks of unrelated women who all live in the same area of the city fulfill kinship roles, functioning as female kin did in traditional situations: visiting, preparing for rites of passage, and aiding one another in various tasks. For older women, their age affords them flexibility and influence: their children are grown, they have years of experience and they have more access to resources. Thus, they can offer support to younger women in an informal system "which can loosely be called patronage" (Kenyon 1998: 20).

This scenario has many striking similarities to the ancient Roman pattern. Like the *oikos* or *domus*, the household (*beit*) can refer to a place or social group. The nuclear family forms the primary core of the household, but temporary adherents, like a cousin who is studying or a sister who has a new baby, are common (Kenyon 1998: 20). Like Roman women, a Sudanese woman has a close male relative as her "guardian" throughout her life. Her father or brother acts as her guardian when she is younger, and her son or paternal nephew when she is older (Kenyon 1991: 23). This tie to her natal family is very similar to a Roman woman who was married *sine manu* (Treggiari 1991: 32–4, 442–6). Like the Romans, Sudanese culture has strong gender delineations, but rather than a strictly physical demarcation of space, it is an "ideational separation": men and women interact mostly with their own gender.²⁸ These similarities suggest that Kenyon's description of Sudanese gender relations provide an apt analogy for considering women's roles and post-marital residence patterns in the cities of the Roman East.

Other aspects of urban Sudanese women's culture cannot be correlated easily with ancient Roman women for lack of evidence, but might be suggestive. In urban Sudan the bilateral nuclear family is becoming the primary unit in poor urban areas, but the ideal of the extended family continued (Kenyon 1991: 24). What Kenyon calls "pseudo-kin" is increasingly important in urban women's lives. Kin terms are used for almost everyone; a person is linguistically associated with one's mother or father, or if she is part of one's

own generation, sibling language is used (Kenyon 1991, 22). Real and fictive kin networks are extremely important to urban women. They are distinctly female networks, with a basis in neighborhoods (or an older woman's children's networks), and form the nexus for traditional obligations and duties (Kenyon 1991: 21). Older women have greater flexibility and often more wealth to offer support for younger women, and their experience gives them authority.

Comparative evidence from Roman Egypt and modern Sudanese urban culture provides a way to conceptualize the complex nature of women's networks and age hierarchies in the patriarchal, urban setting of the first century Mediterranean. We now return to early Christian texts with this comparative material in mind.

Older Women in 1 Timothy 5:3–16

The complex set of women's relationships in 1 Timothy 5:3–16 is difficult to untangle (Bassler 2003: 112).²⁹ Using notions of age hierarchy, as established in 1 Timothy 5:1–2 (above), I argue that the author addresses an underlying problem of “middle-aged” (that is, “older”) women who are not taking proper responsibility for getting the young widows remarried.³⁰ Young widows are depicted as “gadding about from house to house” as “gossips and busybodies” (5:13, New Revised Standard Version). Such shameless behavior would have negatively affected the reputation of the community. The solution was to get them married and have them run households (5:14) – a solution that older women should implement.³¹

Mothers could legally contribute to their daughters' dowries (Gardner 1998: 237–41; Grubbs 2005: 106–9).³² Also, wealthy women often gave charitable donations to young women for dowries. It was less acceptable for men to do so (Treggiari 1991: 344). In an inscription commonly known as *Laudatio Turiae* (CIL 6.1527),³³ the woman is praised by her husband for helping her female kin by taking them in and helping with dowries. He states: “For you brought up your female relations who deserved such kindness in your own houses with us. You also prepared marriage-portions for them so that they could obtain marriages worthy of your family” (1.44–9; translation by Wistrand 1976: 23). The young women receiving the gift were not direct descendants of the donor,³⁴ and demonstrated patronage as part of women's networks.³⁵ In 1 Timothy, neglecting this duty would compromise the reputation of the group, at least in the view of the author of 1 Timothy, for whom proper behavior was so important.

Unlike the “real widows” (*ontōs che&c.macr;ra*; 5:3, 5, 16) who were alone and needed assistance from the church, the younger widows needed an

advocate – the fictive Timothy. He was to “intercede for” (*paraitou*)³⁶ the younger widows who wanted to marry. Without the older women doing their duty to procure potential husbands, they were taking matters into their own hands, looking for husbands outside of the Christian group (thus threatening their “first faith”; 5:12). The older women may have been influenced by the opposing teachers who forbade marriage (4:3). The whole section culminates in a statement meant to admonish these middle-aged women:

If any believing woman [that is, a woman who belongs to the community] has widows [namely, young widows, discussed at length in 5:11–15], let her aid them, and do not let the community be burdened so that the community might aid the real widows. (5:16)

The necessary provision for the young widows would have included dowries, as well as the inquiries to find appropriate matches.³⁷ If such roles are more in the purview of mothers than mothers-in-law, a matricinal scenario is appropriate to imagine here.

In the early Christian texts discussed so far, older women are viewed as influential teachers of younger women (Tit 2:3–5) and patrons for younger women (1 Tim 5:16). The expectations of women highlighted in these communities exhibit important dynamics of age hierarchy in the Roman East.

Acts of Paul and Thecla

As a product of its time and culture, the second-century Christian story of Thecla also reflects age hierarchy among women in Asia Minor.³⁸ It illustrates the power and influence of older women, the potentially close emotional ties shared by mother and adult daughter, and the sense of obligation undergirding this relationship.³⁹

Thecla is a young woman, engaged to be married to Thamyris, a well-placed man of the city (3.11), until she hears an ascetic version of Paul preach celibacy. Her decision to follow Paul and his teachings results in Thamyris ordering her execution. After she is miraculously spared, Thecla finds Paul and travels with him. However, she must defend her own honor when Alexander, a prominent man in Antioch, confronts her in the streets. She publicly humiliates Alexander, and he condemns her to death. In the meantime, Queen Tryphaena, a wealthy widow, takes her into her own household, becoming like a mother as she protects Thecla from potential harm and sexual exploitation. Again, Thecla is miraculously delivered from death when the women in the crowd hypnotize the lions by the strong scent of flowers and herbs they throw into the arena. Thecla baptizes herself, and when

she is released, she dons male clothing. Commissioned by Paul to “go and teach the word of God” (4.16), she returns to her mother and then continues on to teach, having retained her virginity and modesty through it all.

The story reveals how Thecla negotiates relationships with two older women, her (probably) widowed mother (Pervo 2014: 108) and Queen Tryphaena, who functions as a fictive mother and patron. Though in some ways the text represents a protest against women’s typical roles,⁴⁰ it also affirms the usual expectations of age hierarchy among women.

Thecla’s relationship with her mother suggests that her marriage would not have resulted in severed ties.⁴¹ As no father is mentioned, Thecla’s mother likely arranged this highly desirable marriage for her daughter, an arrangement which would secure her own welfare and reputation as well (cf. 4.18; Aubin 1998: 265). The new couple likely would have remained in the city, enabling Thecla’s continued contact with her mother after marriage. When Thamyras and Thecla’s mother realize she is “lost” to Paul’s message, they both weep, along with the servants, for their lost future wife, daughter and mistress (3.10). Thecla’s mother is unlikely to have had such sorrow if she were about to “lose” her daughter to marriage anyway. Even though Thecla’s mother condemns her to the beasts (as an example to other women who might be tempted to reject marriage; 3.20), Thecla offers herself again to her mother at the end of the tale, as a daughter concerned for her mother’s welfare. Thecla’s return suggests that she perceived this relationship as a continuing one, not one that would end with her marriage or (as far as she was concerned) her conversion (4.18).⁴² Her return to her mother, the woman who condemned her to execution, represents a strong filial obligation (cf. Huebner 2013: 80–6; Parkin 2003: 203–35).⁴³

Queen Tryphaena, also an older woman, aids and protects Thecla, as replacement of her own deceased daughter (4.2–7, 14). It is not clear if Tryphaena’s own daughter was married, but her emotional ties to her are obvious (4.4). In addition to her affection, Tryphaena provides materially for Thecla, becoming her patron (4.2, 16).⁴⁴ Unlike Thecla’s mother, Tryphaena seems unconcerned with securing a marriage for Thecla, but is willing to support and protect her chastity, using her finances in the cause (4.16). In fact, both older women are interested in protecting Thecla’s modesty and chastity: Thecla’s mother through a desirable marriage, and Tryphaena through providing protection while Thecla awaits her time in the arena (4.2).

The group of women in the crowd at the arena are suggestive of a female network of support (4.7) – perhaps a network of women resembling the women in Sudanese cities who function as pseudo-kin (Kenyon 1991: 22). They cry for justice for Thecla. They shout as the lioness lies at Thecla’s feet in the arena. They mourn when the protective lioness is killed. They throw herbs and flowers into the arena to put the beasts to sleep (4.8–10).⁴⁵ Thus, their collective voices and action affect Thecla’s victory. Afterwards, within

Tryphaena's household, many of the female servants convert (4.14).⁴⁶ These unnamed women are found both within and outside of the household, perhaps representing the supportive function of women within urban communities, hinting at a female social network (cf. Greene 2013).

In conclusion, using modern ethnographies to help an informed imagination, we can posit female networks of kin and fictive kin that functioned together among the cities of the Roman East. Post-marital arrangements in these urban areas likely afforded continuity of relationships among female kin, even if elements of patrilocal patterns (including the power of a mother-in-law) persisted in some ways. The comparative and direct evidence suggests that "women's worlds" functioned with a structure shaped by age hierarchy. The early Christian texts examined here suggest that conflict, obligation, and affection were typical in women's age hierarchies. Younger women had less social power than older women, but their elders were expected to model, teach, guide, arrange marriages and provide patronage for them. Amid the male perceptions of women in the ancient world that governs most of our sources, we glimpse a recognition of the increased power of women as they moved through the life course, changing roles within the household, and the cooperation and conflict that arose from this age hierarchy among women.

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Notes

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- 2 Ostensibly written from the apostle Paul to his colleagues Timothy and Titus these pseudonymous letters continued Paul's lasting legacy and authority to address problems in a later community. They were likely written several decades after the apostle's death, perhaps around 90–100 CE (Easton 1947: 21; Houlden 1976: 42–3; Hanson 1982: 13; Treblico 2004: 204), though some scholars date them a decade or two earlier (Marshall 1999: 92; Quinn and Wacker 2000: 1) or up to a few decades later (Harrison 1921; Scott 1963: xxiii; Dibelius and Conzelmann 1972: 2; MacDonald 1988: 3–4; Roloff 1988). A minority of scholars attempt to justify why the language, style, theology, and social situation in these letters are so different from Paul's undisputed letters, thereby arguing for Pauline authorship in the 60s CE (most notably Spicq 1947; Jeremias 1949; Knight 1992; Fee 1988; Johnson 2001; Towner 2006).
- 3 For example, those who aspire to be overseers were to be reputable and upright (1 Tim 3:1–7; Tit 1:6–9); women should dress modestly, be silent and not teach or have authority over men (1 Tim 2:9–12; cf. Tit 2:4–5); children should be obedient to parents, fathers should make sure their children are obedient (1 Tim 3:4; cf. Tit 1:6), and slaves should obey their masters (1 Tim 6:1–2; Tit 2:9–10). They were to submit to governing authorities (Tit 3:1) and pray to God for them (1 Tim 2:1–2). Their "good works" (*kala erga*) would be a manifestation of their uprightness (Tit 3:8). The goal of this proper behavior was quiet and peaceful living (1 Tim 2:2), putting their opponents to shame by giving them no reason to condemn them (Tit 2:8; cf. 2:5, 1 Tim 3:7).
- 4 Even though they are pseudonymous, association with the Roman East (Asia Minor in particular) is probable because of the stated destinations of Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3) and Crete (Tit 1:5; Hanson 1982: 14; Marshall 1999: 90). While the early Christians had some distinct behaviors (e.g., refusing

- to sacrifice to the Emperor; Plin. *Ep.* 10.96–7; *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 8.2, 9–11), their texts generally reflect their own cultural norms, especially of the non-elite.
- 5 On women in early Christianity, see especially Fiorenza 1983, 1994; Kraemer 1992, 2011; MacDonald 1996; Osiek and MacDonald 2006; Cohick 2009. Some aspects of age hierarchy among women are discussed briefly in Osiek and MacDonald 1996: 76–7, 91–2; Cohick 2009: 43–6.
 - 6 Translations are my own unless otherwise noted.
 - 7 Other examples in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds of otherwise unrelated communities that functioned like extended kin are discussed in this volume. Noy discusses how migrant families with the same occupation, originating from the same region or worshipping the same ancestral gods functioned as extended family in Delos ([Chapter 7](#), pp. 122–30, especially pp. 128–30). Varto suggests that the term *phrētrai* in early Greece does not necessarily refer to “biological kin” but neighbors or friends in close proximity, like a military “brotherhood” or those sharing religious experience, social space, residence or common goals ([Chapter 3](#), pp. 54–5).
 - 8 Similarly, voluntary associations used sibling language, perhaps to mitigate tension between members (Kloppenborg 1996: 252, 258–9). In the Roman East, early Christian communities resembled voluntary associations in size and composition (Kloppenborg and Wilson 1996; Harland 2003). For voluntary association inscriptions and translations, see Kloppenborg, Ascough and Harland 2011–2014; Ascough, Harland, and Kloppenborg 2012.
 - 9 An important facet of social interaction was age hierarchy: a younger person owed deference to his or her elders, and an older person normally earned precedence with age (Arist.*Pol.* 1.5.2; Juv. *Satire* 13.53–9; Ov. *Fast.* 5.57–70; Val.Max. 2.1.9; Plut. *De lib.* 10, *Mor.* 793D–E; Cicero *Off.* 1.34.122–3; see also Reinhold 1970: 361–2; Eyben 1993: 203; Parkin 2003: 106–15, 227; on mothers and daughters, see Dixon 1988: 210–32).
 - 10 For negative images of old women, see Hor. *Epod.* 8; Mart. 10.90; Prop. 4.5. For idealized, positive images, see Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.2, 7.24; CIL 10.5783; CIL 6.1527 (so-called *Laudatio Turiae*, see below; Hemelrijk 2004: 195). See also discussions in Cockayne 2003; Harlow and Laurence 2002: 127–30; Parkin 2003: 86, 245–6; Bremmer 1987: 203–4.
 - 11 The categories of “old” and “young” depended on the social context in the ancient Mediterranean. The binary concept of old/young formed a flexible way of defining age categories, depending on circumstances (Barclay 2007). “Older women” here are most likely in their forties and fifties, since

this is the age when women typically were mothers-in-law and grandmothers (Parkin 2003: 52), near or at the end of their childrearing phase, active, and at the height of their influence. By modern standards, many women would not reach their forties or fifties. According to Richard P. Saller's calculations (which are to be understood as illustrative of probable demography), by age 20, around three out of every five women had living mothers. By age 30, less than half (about 44 percent) had a living mother (1994: 48–50). Model life tables suggest, however, that people (men and women) in their forties, *on average*, had only a slightly greater mortality rate (17.0 to 18.1 out of 1,000 people) than those in their twenties or thirties (14.1 to 16.7 out of 1,000). The average chance of death began to increase in a person's fifties (23.7 to 32.7 out of 1,000), and sharply after that (54.5 out of 1,000 at 60 years of age and 84.5 out of 1,000 at 65 years of age; Parkin 1992: 148). Parkin argues that model life tables are not gender specific (1992: 104–5). For other considerations on demography, see Scheidel 1996.

- 12 Bruce W. Winter posits that the young women in Titus 2 were emulating the “new” woman of that era, who was sexually promiscuous (2003: 141–69). However, MacDonald convincingly argues that if women behaved in the public realm in ways that lacked restraint, it was enough for the community's reputation to be stained (1996: 27–41). The directive in Tit 2:3–5 lacks the urgency implied by Winter's scenario. While the young women may at times be verging on behavior that would be questioned by non-Christian observers, we need not posit actual sexual activity. Mary Harlow and Ray Laurence maintain that the “new women” in Roman literature were really “a further means of male rhetoric to attack or maintain an ideological submissiveness of wives” (2002: 85).
- 13 This is a methodology used widely in early Christian studies (e.g., Elliott 1993; Malina 1993, Rohrbaugh 1996; MacDonald 1996; Horrell 1999; Neufeld and DeMaris 2010). For Roman Egypt, see Huebner 2013: 8.
- 14 The tumultuous situation in contemporary Sudan is quite different from Kenyon's experience four decades ago, but I use the present tense (the “ethnographic present”) to contrast this modern study with the ancient evidence.
- 15 Anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod uses this phrase for her experience among Egyptian Bedouin women in the 1980s (1993). Lloyd A. Fallers and Margaret C. Fallers suggest the “world of women” is a “private world of the houses and courtyards” in Edremit, Turkey (1976: 246); a similar description can be found in Elizabeth Warnock Fernea's story of women in rural Iraq in the 1960s (1965). The phrase “women's world” is used of early Christian women by Osiek and MacDonald (2006: 163). Similar notions for Roman women can be seen in Treggiari 1991: 421 and Dixon

- 16 On mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationships, see Plut. *Mor.* 138–46 (especially 143) and papyri noted below; see also Huebner 2013: 142–9. For gossip among women in the ancient world and in early Christianity, see Kartzow 2009. Gossip is used as effective social sanction in modern, traditional rural communities in Greece (Danforth 1982) and in Lebanon: “After menopause, [an older woman] influences younger women’s status and reputations (and male honor) by what she chooses to say about them in the community. Older village women have the [sic] credibility in the eyes of both men and women and can effectively pass judgment on another woman’s virtue” (Cool and McCabe 1983: 65).
- 17 Tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is evident in *P.Petaus* 29 (Bagnall and Cribiore 2006: 276) and *SB* 3.6264 (2006: 282).
- 18 This description approximates the female life course in the patriarchal culture of the Roman world (Harlow and Lawrence 2002: 54–64, 84–5; Parkin 2011: 278–80; Huebner 2013: 141–61; cf. Cool and McCabe 1983: 63–4).
- 19 For some discussion on this point, see Dixon 1988: 193, 212, 217.
- 20 Huebner rightly suggests that Eudaimonis and Aline have a “relatively harmonious” relationship, but some tension is detectable (2013: 149). See also Bagnall and Cribiore 2006: 139–63; Cohick 2009: 45.
- 21 *P.Brem.* 63 = *C.Pap.Jud.* 2.442 in Rowlandson 1998: 121–2.
- 22 Eudaimonis also calls Aline, who is Apollonios’ wife, his “sister” (*P.Giss.* 21), but elsewhere refers to her as the mother of Apollonius’ children (*P.Flor.* 3.332) which confirms that Aline is her daughter-in-law (cf. Rowlandson 1988: 120).
- 23 Translation of these letters by Rowlandson 1998: 121–2 (= *C.Pap.Jud.* 2.442). Cf. Bagnall and Cribiore 2006: 143.
- 24 Rowlandson 1998, 121–2 (= *C.Pap.Jud.* 2.442). Cf. Bagnall and Cribiore 2006, 144.
- 25 Apollonios has a sister named Soeris, who may be the same person or not (the debate is outlined in Rowlandson 1998: 124).
- 26 Dixon remarks that “quasi-family,” such as nurses, foster-mothers and “other surrogates,” were probably part of many young women’s life experiences (1988: 17). Cf. Nathan, this volume, [Chapter 13](#), p. 250). On the complexity and adaptability of the Roman family, see Dixon 1992.
- 27 Similarly, a will written in the third century illustrates an older woman’s

- consistent contact with both her daughter and daughter-in-law, with a clear preference for her daughter. She wants to ensure her daughter, and not her daughter-in-law, will inherit her property (*P.Lips* 29, 295 CE; Rowlandson 1998: 197).
- 28 Osiek and MacDonald argue that women were present in the public domain, but maintained a “social invisibility” in the Roman world (2006: 3). Treggiari notes the social division between husband and wife “at all or some stages of their married lives and for much or most of their time” (1991: 424). Women could have jobs outside of the household, often alongside their husbands, but “men still were more likely to work outside the household and to be trained in skills that yielded higher incomes” (Saller 2011: 127). On perceptions and reality of private and public, see Dixon 2001: 113–32.
- 29 Important work on this text includes: Bassler 1984, 2003; Thurston 1989, 2003; Maloney 1994; MacDonald 1996; Winter 2003; Horrell 2008; Kartzow 2009; Collins 2011.
- 30 Developed fully in LaFosse 2011: 241–365, this novel interpretation of the text emerges from considering how age hierarchy functioned in the cultural context of the Roman world.
- 31 Women, especially mothers, were central in arranging marriages among the Roman elite (Plut. *Pomp.* 9.2, *Ti. Gracch.* 4.2, *Ant.* 87.1; Cic. *Att.* 13.28, *Div.* 1.104; *Clu.* 12–14; Livy *Epit.* 38.57.7–8; Stat. *Silv.* 3.5.54–80; Verg. *Aen.* 11.581; Phillips 1978; Gardner 1986: 43; Dixon 1988: 62–3, 215; Treggiari 1991: 134–8; Harlow and Laurence 2002: 58). Their influence was great, even if their legal consent was not needed (see Grubbs 2005: 106–9, 118–19).
- 32 “Any person can give or promise a dowry” (Ulpian, *Rules* 6.2; translation by Lefkowitz and Fant 2005: 115). On women providing dowries: *P.Tebt.* 3.815, fragment 4; *D.* 16.1; 23.3.5.9; 34.5.16; *Cod. Iust.* 5.12.8, 17, 18. Dixon notes: “Unfortunately, dowry was one of those aspects of life so taken for granted by the sources that it is referred to only allusively” (1988: 216; see also Pomeroy 1984: 91–3; Gardner 1986: 97–116).
- 33 For discussions on provenance and commentary on this inscription, see Winstrand 1976; Horsfall 1983; Flach 1991; Hemelrijk 2004.
- 34 She had no children of her own (2.31), so she proposed that her husband marry a younger woman to beget children, and she would act as a sister and mother-in-law (2.34–5). He evidently did not marry again (at least while his first wife was alive).
- 35 On early Christian women as patrons, see Osiek 2005; Osiek and

MacDonald 2006: 210–19; Cohick 2009, 301–19. On female patronage in the Roman world, see Dixon 2001: 89–112, especially 100–6.

- 36 This translation is justified in LaFosse 2011: 328–30.
- 37 The statement in 5:8 also addresses the issue of provision: “And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”
- 38 The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* was written in Asia Minor and is generally dated 140–200 CE, perhaps closest to 170–5 CE (Pervo 2014: 41; Elliott 1993: 357; Hilhorst 1996: 162, n.280; Bremmer 1996: 56–7). For the text and commentary see Pervo 2014; Barrier 2009; Rordorf 1997; Elliott 1993: 353, 364–74. The sections here follow the current standard numbering of Rordorf 1997. Although a narrative, the text can represent historical women, as argued by Matthews 2001 and Kraemer 2011.
- 39 This text represents a trajectory of Pauline communities in Asia Minor that dealt with social tensions very differently from the letters to Timothy and Titus. Instead of a paternalistic Paul, this story portrays an ascetic Paul. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla* represent a challenge to certain public norms and behaviors expected of women. Whereas the author of 1 Timothy condemns the opponents who forbid marriage (4:3), the young woman named Thecla challenges social conventions of the day by following the teachings of an ascetic Paul and refusing to marry. For theories on the relationship between the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and the letters to Timothy and Titus, see MacDonald 1983; Barrier 2009: 33–45; den Dulk 2012.
- 40 Thecla disobeys her mother, thwarting the cultural ideal of a daughter submitting to her mother (see footnote 9). For debate on Thecla’s actions and character as countercultural, see Davies 1980; MacDonald 1983; Burrus 1987; Bremmer 1996; Cooper 1996; Aubin 1998; Ng 2004; Lipsett 2010; Kraemer 2011, 117–52.
- 41 Pace Ross S. Kraemer, who claims that in compelling her to marry her betrothed, Thecla’s mother tries to force her acceptance of patriarchal norms on her daughter (1993: 111–12), thereby illustrating that patrilocal marriage separated mothers and their adult daughters (1993: 104).
- 42 Although M. Aubin is convinced that Thecla’s mother converts (1998: 271), Kraemer rightly argues that the text is not explicit on this point (2011: 133).
- 43 As part of filial duty, financial security may also be in mind (Barrier 2009: 187).
- 44 Magda Misset-van de Weg argues persuasively that Tryphaena functions

as Thecla's patron (1996), but also concludes that she could not be Thecla's "adoptive" mother as others argue (Aubin 1998: 269; cf. Kraemer 2011, 133, n.66). This chapter suggests that the two roles were not necessarily mutually exclusive (so also Lipsett 2010: 77; Pervo 2014: 151).

- 45 Pervo argues they "douse" Thecla with the fragrant herbs and flowers that affect the animals as they get close to her (2014: 166).
- 46 The genitive plural of *paidiskē* (*paidiskōn*) is ambiguous here; it could refer to male and/or female slaves (Barrier 2009: 117), but same word in 3.10 (*paidiskai*, nominative plural; referring to a different set of servants) is clearly feminine (Barrier 2009: 94–5).

Family Forms and Conflicts in Roman North Africa

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Introduction

Ancient North Africa differs markedly from our modern understanding. Pliny the Elder was succinct: “The Greeks have given the name of Libya to Africa, and have called the sea that lies in front of it the Libyan Sea. It has Egypt for its boundary” (*Nat. Hist.* 5.1—trans. H. T. Riley). Egypt in the Graeco-Roman world was regarded as part of Asia instead; North Africa lay west of its boundaries. Romans from at least the first century BCE accepted this division, as is attested for example in Sallust’s *Bellum Jugurthinum* (*Sal. Jug.* 17.3f.; 19.3; Huß 1996: 217–20). And as late as the seventh century CE, Isidore of Seville was able to give quite a precise description: Africa extended along south through Ethiopia as far as Mount Atlas. Its boundary on the north was the Mediterranean Sea. The Spanish priest even lists most of Rome’s African provinces (Cyrenaica/Pentapolis, Tripolitana, Byzacena, Africa Proconsularis/Carthage, Numidia, Mauretania Sitifensis/Tingitana; *Etym.* 14.3.27–8).

The Greeks conceptualized this division far earlier and in more ethnographic terms: Herodotus distinguished the “ploughing” Africans west of Lake “Triton” (most likely the Gulf of Gabès) from the “meat-eating and milk-drinking nomads” east of the Triton. Furthermore, Herodotus distinguished between immigrant Africans (Phoenicians and Greeks) and indigenous Africans (Libyans and *Aithiopes*) in his Libyan logos at the end of book four (4.191.1–3; 4.197.2; see Asheri, Lloyd, and Corcella 2007; Zimmermann 1999). While from the fifth century BCE, the term “Libyan” was applied to the Carthaginians and their allies, later it became a term for the inhabitants of North Africa in general. (Herodian, for example, called the emperor Septimius Severus a Libyan (3.10.6). The sixth century CE historian Procopius labeled the Latin-speaking African population Libyans: “All the Libyans being Romans in earlier times had come under the Vandals by no will of their own and had suffered many outrages at the hand of these barbarians” (*BV* 1.20.19—trans. H. B. Dewing).

Moreover, for many ancient authors, North Africa was a mystic land. South of

its civilized area, in the sun's heat, lay Ethiopia. Since the Homeric epics, Αἰθιοπία applied not only to the Upper Nile, but to all the regions of the Sahara in general.

Where the south declines towards the setting sun lies the country called Aethiopia, the last inhabited land in that direction. There gold is obtained in great plenty, huge elephants abound, with wild trees of all sorts, and ebony; and the men are taller, handsomer, and longer lived than anywhere else.

(Hdt. 3:114 – trans. A. D. Godley)

Various barbarian nations lived there as well as the fabulous basilisk, which killed with its breath and smell (Isid. Etym. 14.5.3; see also Plin. *Nat.* 8.78 and Isid. *Etym.* 12.4.6). And a bifurcation of North Africa and its peoples since the time of Herodotus had been fixed: agricultural and urbanized inhabitants lived along the shores of the Mediterranean, while in the hinterland nomads and pastoralists slept in tents or huts and were not civilized.

This division lasted well into Late Antiquity. Procopius categorized the Moors, *Maurusioi*, as the real African barbarians, wholly different from the decadent Vandals who entered North Africa in 429:

For of all the nations which we know, that of the Vandals is the most luxurious, and that of the Moors the most hardy...The Moors live in stuffy huts both in winter and in summer and at every other time, never removing from them either because of snow or of the heat of the sun or any other discomfort whatever due to nature. And they sleep on the ground, the prosperous among them, if it should so happen, spreading a fleece under themselves. Moreover, it is not customary among them to change their clothing with the seasons, but they wear a thick cloak and a rough shirt at all times. And they have neither bread nor wine nor any other good thing, but they take grain, either wheat or barley, and, without boiling it or grinding it to flour or barley-meal, they eat it in a manner not a whit different from that of animals.

(BV 4.6.15–20)

Procopius admittedly applied his own prejudices and cultural chauvinism to characterize the Moors, comparing their manners to those of animals. But the luxury-loving Vandals, while barbarians, too, had been weakened by Roman civilization – a stereotype directed by Tacitus against the Britons who were pacified after adopting Roman manners (*Agr.* 10.11). The Moors were the real barbarians: brave, hardened, fit for war, even if somewhat unkempt (Conant 2012: 263–70; on stereotypes, Woolf 2011).

As modern historians considering family forms and conflict within families in ancient North Africa, we, too, must create our own chronological and

geographical limits. In our chapter, we want to cover a long chronological period, beginning with the first century BCE and incipient Romanization of the region and ending with the mid-sixth century CE, when the Byzantine general Belisarius destroyed the Vandal Kingdom (Steinacher 2016; Berndt and Steinacher 2008). More concisely, we will focus on three distinct stages: Roman North Africa, a Christianized North Africa, and finally Vandal North Africa. Each era offered distinct, developing customs and ideology, but also new forms of family conflict. Our particular focus will center on the correlation between family and property; and in Late Antiquity, on dynasties and power (for a detailed history, see Broughton 1929; Picard 1990; Lepelley 1998).

A challenge to this analysis, besides several methodological concerns, arises from the sources. These difficulties are spatial as well as temporal. North Africa encompassed an enormous and varied territory, with data scattered unequally throughout the space and time. The evidence also offers a complex and not always clear range of cultural contexts, not the least of which were the contrasts between urban and rural life. Bearing in mind, too, evidence is both literary (Apuleius, Tertullian, Augustine, etc.) and epigraphic (primarily the military camp in Lambaesis – see Janon 1973), we will limit our examination to a series of individual cases before drawing general conclusions.

Roman and Christian North Africa

As implied in the introduction, the history of Roman North Africa began with the creation of *Africa vetus* in 146 BCE, after the third Punic War and the destruction of Carthage. Yet the process of annexation of North Africa was not complete until the reign of the Emperor Claudius. Colonization and integration of Roman customs and laws did not begin in earnest before the first century CE. But Romanization would have a lasting effect, once thousands of Roman colonists and members of the Roman aristocracy started to settle in North Africa (on Romanization and Roman North Africa, see Broughton 1929; Picard 1990; Lepelley 1998: 79–84, 112–14; Brüggemann 2003; Schörner 2005; Matz 2005; on its development, Revell 2008; Hingley 2005; Ando 2000; Woolf 1998; Mattingly 1997). This process included the introduction of Italian familial customs and norms (Overbeck 1973).

In order to discuss family forms in Roman North Africa, it is necessary first to specify the meaning of the Roman word *familia*. As Saller observed some years ago (Saller 1984), the Romans used two different words: *familia* and *domus*. He noted that most Roman sources, especially Ulpian (Ulp. *Dig.* 50.16.195.1–4, esp. 2), defined *familia* in a strict legal sense as all *personae* in the *potestas* of the *paterfamilias*, either by nature or by law. This definition precluded extended and extra-household family, especially *cognati*. However,

Saller demonstrated that only *agnati* were labeled *familia*; Romans used *domus* to describe more complex household and kinship relations. *Domus* could include a variety of family members, slaves (Mouritsen 2011), kinship groups including agnates and cognates, ancestors and descendants (Saller 1984: 342–3). Saller concludes, however, that neither *familia* nor *domus* come close to the modern meaning of the nuclear family. Complicating these definitions, more recent studies have shown that, in contrast to the evidence from epitaphs indicating a dominance of nuclear structures, many people lived in extended or multiple family households structures (Hope 1997: 113–14 and Bodel 2001: 38).

Analyzing family in the Roman periphery is controversial and is by no means settled (Huebner this volume; see also Saller 1994: 1–9; Rawson 2011: 1–12). That said, an evaluation of epigraphic sources shows a clear “Roman” gap in the marital age between women and men (Shaw 1987: 30–46). In the Western half of the Empire, young women tended to be married early, probably in their late teens, as was usual in Roman society (see Shaw 1987: figs. 1.4, 1.5). Most men seem to have married in their late twenties. As *iustes nuptes* were focused on reproduction, remarriage (notably of widows) was frequent. Accordingly, much of the scholarship has focused on the nature of marriage, household makeup, and their relationship to a possible “Mediterranean” model (Huebner this volume).

This raises a question for our interests: did Romanization destroy any kind of “African family model” or family attributes that were typical for the African periphery? We know of a variation on so-called Levirate or close-kin marriages in North Africa, for example, associated with Near Eastern practices and perhaps “imported” to North Africa as well from Phoenician colonization (see Apuleius below). We are also aware of the high respect accorded to elders (*seniores*). Especially in rural villages, the elders constituted sort of a family and political institution for social and regional affairs, whose roles seemed similar to municipal administration. This respect and authority survived the process of Christianization and the elders endured as a well-defined, influential body within African communities (Shaw 1982a: 207–26). Having said all this, however, evidence of an “African family model” is missing, and it is safer to suppose a wide variability of family models: nuclear and extended structures, Roman and indigenous forms (Cherry 1998: 156). A topography and environment full of contrasts, diverse economic and sociological conditions, the difference between urban and rural structures, and the distinctness of marginal and frontier zones undoubtedly placed limitations on Romanization and guaranteed the endurance of certain traditions.

We can, however, perhaps make some generalizations about Roman cultural penetration. North Africa was one of the most important agrarian regions in the Roman Empire and its population can rightly be considered largely

agrarian. Towards the end of the third century, the African provinces became the main producer of cash crops like grain and olives (Gerhardt 2008: 652; Ruffing 2008: 837). The industrial sector, producing *amphorae* and pottery, was booming as well and dominated the Mediterranean market (Witschel 1999: 113–33, Ruffing 2008; for ports, Fischer 1993: 15, Bockmann 2013: 6, 64; for inland, Leitch 2011: 168–96, Mattingly and Hitchner 1995). This meant the rural regions and especially the marginal zones were cultivated and thus exposed to Roman patterns of life (Carandini 1983: 45–62; Stone 1998: 103–13; Brüggemann 2005: 202). Families of all social classes increasingly depended upon and were defined by landholdings and property, and the transmission of such property; the well-known career of the “Harvester of Mactar” is a case in point (*CIL* VIII: 11824 = ILS 7457; see Stone 1998: 106). Property was a safeguard for families and conflicts within them arose most frequently when it came to its transmission (e.g., *CIL* VIII: 212 and 213; Groupe 1993).

Roman jurists were fully aware of this problem. Inheritance law, including precise guidelines how family properties should be transmitted within the family structure, takes up over 20 percent of the *Digesta*. The head of the family was responsible for ensuring continuity and financial stability, as well as for the protection of the family property (Lindsay 2011: 346–60; Gardner 2011: 361–76). The head of the family was either a *bonus paterfamilias* or a *malus paterfamilias* depending on his ability to avoid conflicts in organizing his will and heritage (Sen., *Ben.* 4.27.5; 4.39.2). Equal distribution to male and female heirs was a legal ideal, but Roman law was flexible in order to meet the specific needs and assured continuity of individual families. Significantly, “testamentary clauses banning alienation of property outside the family” were of primary importance (Saller 1994: 168).

Apuleius’ *defense* (*Apologia*) in the Roman provincial court at Sabratha around 158 CE, when he was accused of being a magician, is illustrative of these concerns (Hammerstaedt 2002: 9–19 for an overview). Born in the small African city of Madauros in the province of Numidia around 125 CE, he was the son of a wealthy family of Roman origin (23.1 and 24.9). His marriage to a rich and much older widow, Amelia Pudentilla, led to an accusation by his wife’s family, who claimed Apuleius had used magic to seduce her (1–4; see Gutsfeld 1992: 250–68; Mratschek-Halfmann 1993). But the accusation largely seems a pretext for expressing anger and fear of losing parts of the family property to an outsider (89.1–6; 90.1–4; 99.5; 101.3). The defense speech of Apuleius provides not only insight into the stemma of Aemilla Pudentilla’s family (see Appendix), but also issues of property transmission and Levirate marriage.

Aemilla Pudentilla was a wealthy young woman of noble origin when she married Sicinius Amicus in Oea (89.1–2). Her wealth consisted of many estates and other property she inherited from her father as his only heir (71.4;

91.6; 92.3). Around the age of 30, she became a widow with two sons – Sicinius Pontianus and Sicinius Pudens. Both sons came under the *potestas* of their grandfather (only known as Sicinius). As an ambitious father-in-law he put pressure on Aemilla Pudentilla to agree to marry one of her deceased husband's brothers – Sicinius Clarus or Sicinius Aemillianus (68.4). Wishing to avoid family conflict and fearing that her sons could possibly lose their grandfather's patrimony, she accepted an engagement with Clarus (68.3–4). However, this marital arrangement was never consummated. During the following years, Aemilla Pudentilla gained more independence – although she was under the legal guardianship (*tutela mulieris*) of Cassius Longinus – her sons received an inheritance from their grandfather. Aemilla, as a strong and self-confident woman, then met and married Apuleius, who was a friend of her son Pudens (73.9).

Several years later, her elder son, Pontianus, died unexpectedly, leaving behind a young widow, Herennia (73.6). Again, the father-in-law, Herennius Rufinus, wanted his daughter to remarry a close relation, in this case Pudens (97.5).

Both situations of intended remarriage plans by fathers-in-law reveal an interest in Levirate marriage, in spite of a Romanized society (Davies 1981, 1981a; Weisberg 2009). What kind of advantage did this practice offer to elite families, one strongly associated with Semitic patriarchal societies? Such unions served to strengthen family ties and alliances, especially in politically significant unions. In the specific cases of the Sicinii (98.2; 101.3) and Rufinius Herennius (77.1–4), the dowry, patrimony, and property of Aemilla Pudentilla would have been kept in the family (Corbier 2005: 271–7). Making these desires manifest was the main point of Apuleius' defense speech. His stepson and main plaintiff Sicinius Pudens was pressured by his uncle Sicinius Aemillianus and possibly his father-in-law Rufinius Herennius to bring a lawsuit. Apuleius even claimed that the plaintiffs bribed a dubious witness, Iunius Crassus. Apuleius in sum turned this case of sorcery into a family battle over inheritance and wealth. We do not know if Apuleius, as he had claimed in his speech, disavowed his wife's property and only the heirs of Aemilla Pudentilla inherited her considerable wealth (91.6; 100.1–3).

Apuleius' case illustrates perhaps a common enough clash between family members of the African local elite. But we can find similarities among the humbler classes of North Africa. Two large stone plaques found at Ain Merwâna discovered by Emile Masqueray in 1877 and recently examined by Shaw record a decree concerning a local irrigation scheme during the reign of Elagabalus (*CIL* VIII Suppl. 2:18587 = ILS II 5793; Shaw 1982).

Unfortunately, only about a fifth of the inscription survives. It not only details information about an ancient irrigation system, but also how a small rural community with both Roman and non-Roman families (a distinction that must be based on nomenclature) transmitted wealth, property, and landholdings

over generations and what strategies preserved patrimonies. Aïn Merwâna rests in the semi-arid lands of the southern Maghrib, 100 kilometers southwest of Cirta and 40 kilometers northwest of Lambaesis. Arid plains, lowlands, and the massive mountain *Aurasius mons* define the environment. In ancient times, this small settlement was known as Lamasba (Shaw 1982b: 62–8), probably established or colonized by Roman soldiers in the first or early second century CE. During Roman control, Lamasba had a large rural *territorium* of about 300 square kilometers.

The decree may have resulted from local conflicts regarding the irrigation system and water use, and the original text may have mentioned hundreds of local properties (Shaw 1982b: 62). But the surviving fragments still record 85 irrigation plots, presenting perhaps about half of the total number. Scholars have been able to generate a register of 43 full names plus three *praenomina*. Every entry has an identical structure: the name of proprietor, the size of property (represented by Shaw as “K,” a unique African measurement of land, approximately 16 square cubits; Shaw 1982b: 82), the dates of irrigation, and the total time of irrigation (Shaw 1982b: 72–81). Study of nomenclature and property holdings reveals what must have been typical practices of property transmission within families. Smaller landowners tended to hold land units in blocks contiguous to each other. In other words, ownership and location of ownership was closely connected to families and kinship ties (Shaw 1982b: 90). Of equal interest, a “Semitic” system of transmission, where the eldest son received twice the share of land as other heirs, is also in evidence.

Let us look at several examples. Five members of the *Apuleii* family and their property holdings are known (see Appendix): The heirs of Apuleus Faustinus held in common the plot 1.3 of 11 K. Two of his sons, Apuleus Africanus and Apuleus Rogatianus, possessed plots 1.4 and 1.5, immediately adjacent to their father’s plot 1.3, with 110K each. Apuleus Processus, likely the eldest son, owned plot 1.6 of 220K. Shaw suggested that Apuleus Africanus and Apuleus Rogatianus were joint heirs of 22 K and subdivided it into two equal plots. Only Apuleus Rogatus owned a property (plot 4.13 of 150K) beyond the family block, perhaps acquired by marriage.

Six members of the large landholding *Germanii* family, probably with Germanius Petronianus as the *paterfamilias*, are also well documented (among others; Shaw 1982: 89–90). His son Germanius Valentinus owned plot 4.7 of 664K. The *heres* of Petronianus held the adjacent plot 4.6 of 620K and Germanius Valens owned plot 4.5 of 609K. On *scala* 2 of the decree, we find further property holdings. Germania Castula, likely Petronianus’ daughter or wife, owned plot 2.12 of 803K. An identically named son, Germanius Petronianus, held plot 2.13 of 440K. Plot 2.14 of 440K belonged to Germanius Dentilianus. Germanius Valentinus also owned plot 2.16 of 430K. The *Germanii* family’s holdings were presumably enhanced by the marriage of Germanius Dentilianus to a daughter of the *Dentilii* family. The couple

held plots 2.10 and 2.11. Both families together owned a collective property of 4,655K, possibly making them one of the biggest landholders in Lamasba.

Finally, in contrast to this type of property transmission, joint ownership and shared property by family members was also practiced. Fuficius Felix and Fuficius Priscianus held plot 2.9 of 360K in common. The same pair, brothers or close relatives, also owned plot 4.15 of 600K.

The remains of the irrigation scheme in Lamasba indicate typical patterns of property transmission in rural families: family blocks of property, intermarriage to strengthen property ties, the Semitic tradition of double privileging the eldest son, and overlapping family interest in property lots. These examples admittedly do not indicate conflicts over family inheritances. But the example of Apuleius suggests that similar problems must have existed in Lamasba as well.

Before discussing family and conflict in Vandal North Africa, it is necessary to make some remarks on possible influences of Christian ideology and behavior on family forms in North Africa. First of all, it has to be stressed that the North African periphery came in contact with Christianity very early. By the third century, African society became substantially Christian. Eventually the North African provinces would become the most Christianized areas in the Roman Empire (Löhr 2007: 40). Tertullian, writing around 200 CE, even claimed that Christians were the majority in the cities (*Scap.* 2). Although Tertullian might have exaggerated, the concentration of Christians in Africa seemed to be higher than anywhere else in the Roman Empire. An estimated 2,500 Christians out of a total population of 70,000 in Carthage in Tertullian's day is a reasonable estimate (Bockmann 2013: 26; Rebillard 2013: 10). More concrete figures reinforce this: datable epigraphic sources are available from the third century CE. A large number of church sites have been identified (Brown 2012: 334). We know of almost 250 episcopal sees in North Africa by 300 CE. And at a conference in Carthage, held in 411 (admittedly made up of both Catholics and Donatists), 560 bishops participated (Leone 2007: 231–47; Löhr 2007: 9–51; Sears 2007: 17–21, 99–108, 120–3; Dossey 2010; Horbury 2013; Rebillard 2013).

Such a presence raises questions about Christian influence on family life and family forms in North Africa. In spite of its presence, however, the general consensus was that religion's effect was negligible; Kyle Harper concluded "Christianity was more influenced by Greco-Roman structures than vice versa" (Harper 2012: 680). Despite this assessment, the influence on some aspects of family life was enormous, especially on the ideal of sexually exclusive marriages (although see Mus. Ruf., 12; Harper 2012: 680–4). This doctrine was espoused particularly by Chrysostom, but visible broadly in the homiletics of the Late Antique clergy. "The Roman model of marriage simply did not demand sexual exclusivity from men" (Harper 2012: 681) and this was the point where Christian norms and the moral standards of the Church

actively sought to modify social behavior within the household.

We do not know if this pastoral campaign was completely successful, even in terms of changing attitudes. Augustine of Hippo, the best-known proponent of this issue in North Africa as a bishop, admitted that his own sexual impulses had led to his failure in his younger days (*Conf.* 2.1–33). At the age of 30, Augustine was urged by his mother to leave his concubine by affiancing him to a minor from a good family. While waiting for the girl to come of age, he continuously felt sexually restless and indeed took a second concubine to satisfy his lust (*Conf.* 6.15). Human urges and common practice undoubtedly remained a strong impediment to a new ideal.

Despite a limited area of impact, the Christian marriage ideal did have implications for the family that went beyond conjugal fidelity. When it comes to the “barbarian age” of Africa, it is important to keep in mind that they were Christians as well. And it appears very likely that the Moorish and Vandal elites were also more Roman than we have tended to think.

Family and Power I: The Family of Nubel, African Power Brokers in between Rome and the Desert

Two case studies will complete this overview on families in Roman North Africa by focusing on dynasty and politics. Moorish and Vandal families acted as regional power brokers in Late Antiquity.

Nubel, who had been the most powerful petty king, (*regulus potentissimus*), among the Mauritanian nations, died, and left several sons, some legitimate, others born of concubines (*et legitimos et natos e concubinis*), of whom Sammac, a great favourite of the Count Romanus, was slain by his brother Firmus; and this deed gave rise to civil discords, and wars.

(Amm. Mar. 29.5.2—trans. C. D. Yonge)

This is how Ammianus Marcellinus introduces the history of the power struggles in Africa during the 370s. But what role did Nubel’s family play? Was it a “real” family or is the topic of dynasty and kinship only a literary motif Ammianus, one used by other ancient authors? And was it significant that family, rather than a single individual, was engaged in a quest for influence and power? (see *PRLE* 1:237, 262, 340, 395–6, 566, 591, 633–4, 801; see also Modéran 2003: 482 and 511).

Let us begin with Nubel’s political and social identity. Being the father of two rebels opposing the Western imperial government, the historian described him

as an African barbarian ruler. But Nubel's full name was Flavius Nubel. Like many other soldiers serving the emperor in Late Antiquity, he proudly bore the name of the first-century Flavian imperial dynasty. Since Constantius I, the father of Constantine the Great, Flavian nomenclature had become quite common in military circles, even to non-Romans such as Flavius Odovacar or Flavius Theodericus (Wolfram 1997: 57–62). Nubel was a Roman citizen, a military commander (*praepositus*) of a regional cavalry unit in the northern regions of the Mauritanian province and apparently a devout Christian. Together with his wife Nonnica (Monnica), he commissioned a church at Rusguniae; and as a wealthy man, was able to equip this basilica with relics, including a purported piece of the True Cross (*CIL* VIII:9255; cf. Laporte 2004). The inscription from Nubel's basilica reveals another detail Ammianus does not mention: Nubel's father, Saturninus, was a *comes* and thus a high-ranking Roman officer as well. So Nubel's family actually formed part of the Romano-African elite for several generations (Shaw 2011: 39 and n. 84; Drijvers 2007: 134–5; Blackhurst 2004 :64–5; *PCBE* I: 790; Duval 1982, v. 1:352, n. 167).

According to Ammianus, Nubel had seven children – six sons and a daughter. Two sons, Firmus and Dius bore Roman names, like their grandfather, Saturninus. But Sammac (Zammac), Gildo, Mazuca, Mascezel and Cyria bore Berber ones (Drijvers 2007: 135 and n. 18; Brett and Fentress 1996: 71–2). These were children of different women, although we only know of Nonnica. Nor do we know which sons were legitimate and which were not, but some of Nubel's children's mothers were concubines.

Nubel served the emperor and was part of the Roman administration in Africa. In contrast, his son Firmus became – according to the *Historia Augusta* – a petty brigand, a *latrunculus*. The Roman sources tend to emphasize their foreignness; they keep quiet about the Roman part of their identity, depicting local leaders as fierce barbarians. As a barbarian usurper, he is not even characterized as a *tyrannus*; Firmus is only a local bandit (*HA Quad. Tyr.* 2.1–4; Blackhurst 2004: 59).

When Nubel died, a power struggle inside his family emerged and war broke out in the highlands of Mauretania. Firmus killed his half-brother Sammac (Amm. Marc. 29.5.13; *CLE* 1916 = *ILS* 3:9351), who had been supported by the Roman authorities (Shaw 2011: 39–40; Brett and Fentress 1996: 71–4; Blackhurst 2004: 61–2; Wickham 2005: 334). Subsequently, between 372 and 375, Firmus led an uprising against the *Comes Africae* Romanus (Drijvers 2007: 133, n. 10; Demandt 1968: 277–92). All Nubel's sons fought with Firmus except Gildo, who stayed loyal to the Roman government – a decision that would later profit him. The reasons behind the revolt are not completely clear, as our sources are mainly interested in the affairs of the Roman state. But Firmus claimed loyalty to the state, accusing Romanus of tax fraud and having misused his authority. Ambassadors from both men petitioned

Valentinian I at Trier. Romanus won more support at court and successfully cast Firmus as a lawless rebel. In the “rebellion” that followed, Firmus’ soldiers looted coastal cities (Amm. Marc. 29.5.1–4; Oros. 7.33.5; Epit. *Caes.* 45; Romanus: *PLRE I* :768). To make matters worse, Firmus’ troops may have acclaimed him as emperor in 372 (Amm. Marc. 29.5.20; Zos. 4.16.3; Drijvers 2007: 139–42; but cf. Bénabou 1976; Mattingly 1996; Shaw 2011: 45 and Kotula 1970; note similarities to Amm. Mar. 20:4:18).

Valentinian in response sent the *magister militum* Theodosius (father of Theodosius I, usually “Count Theodosius”) to Africa to suppress the rebellion. Firmus’ brothers, Dius and Mascezel, led a confederation of locals, the *gens Tyndensium et Masinissensium*, and engaged Theodosius’ forces. After a crushing defeat, Ammianus reports that only Mascezel was able to flee and survive; and he would play an important part in this African family drama more than two decades later. We are not informed what happened to Dius and may have perished, but Ammianus does not mention him again (Amm. Mar. 29.5.11–14).

Count Theodosius sent Gildo to support Romanus and began negotiations with Firmus. This proved unfruitful and a guerrilla war in the highlands of Mauretania followed. Firmus found new allies and a third brother, Mazuca joined his side, commanding the confederation of the *Isaflenses*, and with whom he could take refuge. But Mazuca, too, was killed and Theodosius had his corpse beheaded and displayed in the streets of the provincial capital, Caesarea. Shortly thereafter, Firmus was betrayed by Mazuca’s successor, Igmazen. He committed suicide and Theodosius had his victory. The African rebellion was over (Amm. Mar. 29.5.21–56; Oros. 7.36.4; Aug., *Contra epist. Parm.i* 1:10:16; for possible religious dimensions to this affair, Frend 1952: 73 and Shaw 2011: 45–6).

Despite Ammianus’ account, Firmus and Sammac were not simple Moorish princes, ruling in the mountainous hinterland of the African provinces. They were, like their father, Roman military commanders. They had access to military and state resources, including *fabricae*, storage depots, roads and the *cursus publicus*. This meant, among other things, that they knew how to disrupt the North African economy. The region’s products were critical to the cities of the Roman West. The uprising in the mountains and attacks of the coastal cities thus endangered the vital interests of the Western Empire. By 375, however, at least three of Nubel’s sons were dead. Sammac had been murdered by Firmus at the beginning of the struggles for power in Africa, Mazuca had died fighting Theodosius, and Firmus himself had committed suicide. Dius, too, probably did not survive the conflict with the imperial government. Only Gildo and Mascezel had survived.

The loyal Gildo would become a major player in regional and imperial politics by the end of the fourth century. After the rebellion, this son of Nubel received an immense patrimony confiscated from Firmus. Later, probably in

386, the emperor Theodosius I appointed Gildo *comes Africae* and *magister utriusque militiae per Africam* – count and master of both armies (infantry and cavalry) in Africa (*CTh* 9.7.9 (393)). These appointments were not only for his support. Gildo had taken the state's side again in 388, when the usurper Maximus claimed Italy (Oros. 7.36; Redies 1998). Theodosius I had also used marriage to ensure Gildo's loyalty and to consolidate peace in the African provinces: his daughter Salvina was married to Nebridius, the nephew of Theodosius' first wife, Aelia Flacilla (Jer., *Ep.* 123.17.9; *PLRE* I:341, 620 and 799). North Africa merited consideration and its elite thus might hope for imperial connections. Such imperial matches would happen again in the following century, with the Vandal royal house linking itself more successfully and directly to the house of Theodosius.

As a result, the African provinces were ruled by Gildo with a high degree of independence, very much as the Vandal king Geiseric would do some 50 years later (Claud., *De Bello Gild.* 2.57; Shaw 2011: 46–7). Gildo's foreign policy tended to pit the Western against the Eastern Empire. In the year following his promotion, the African *comes'* opposition to Maximus worked to his advantage. But during another usurpation in the West in 393 and 394, Gildo initially allowed African grain deliveries to continue to Italy. No African units assisted Theodosius' campaign against the pretender; Gildo remained neutral, awaiting the outcome of the civil war. The count used similar tactics against Theodosius's heir, Honorius. Grain supplies desperately needed in Italy appeared erratically, causing food shortages in Italy and its capital. The master of Africa sold grain and other products to a broader Mediterranean market and became richer in the process (Claud., *De Bello Gild.* 2.17–8, 34, 241–52; Redies 1998).

Eventually, the court at Ravenna reacted. When Stilicho, the master of soldiers in Italy, prepared to invade Africa, Gildo declared himself to be a subject of the Eastern emperor, Arcadius. The Senate declared him a *hostis publicus*, an enemy of the state (Symm., *Ep.* 4.5; Blackhurst 2004: 65–70). Gildo's brother Mascezel, who had previously supported Firmus' rebellion, was sent to Africa to unseat and replace his brother. How he survived the 370 rebellion is unknown, but Mascezel seems to have become a loyal or at least a willing lieutenant of the Roman state. Agreeing to serve under Stilicho, Gildo responded by having his brother's sons killed. He returned with a small force and was able to defeat Gildo near Theueste. The disloyal African *comes* was executed; Stilicho had Mascezel drowned immediately afterwards. Nubel's line had ended (Claud., *De Bello Gild.* 2:390–1; Zos., 5.11.3; Oros. 7.36.4; Marc. *Com.* s.a 398; see Diesner 1962: 178–86 and Redies 1998).

The family's property, however, did not survive and was confiscated by the state. The house of Nubel's immense wealth fascinated the contemporary writers. It was so extensive that a special *comes Gildoniaci patrimonii* was created. Such a title meant this officer was responsible only to the emperor

(CTh 7.8.7 (400), 9 (399), 9.42.16 (399), 19 (405); *Not dig. occ.* 12.5). When the Vandals arrived in Africa in 429, Geiseric confiscated this patrimony and quickly became the richest and most powerful man in the African provinces.

Brent Shaw in particular has doubted Ammianus' account of Nubel's offspring. Although he concedes that Firmus and Gildo could have been blood siblings, he regards it as more probable that the term "brother" in this case indicated "a fictive kinship relationship between them" (Shaw 2011: 37–8, note 80; Shaw 1997). There is precedent to suggest Nubel's "sons" may very well have been unrelated by blood: Ammianus may have adapted the tale of King Micipsa (who died in 118 BCE) as a literary model to depict contemporary African affairs. Micipsa had been survived by two natural sons, Adherbal and Hiempsal, and by his adopted nephew, Jugurtha, who was no blood relation. When King Micipsa died, Jugurtha murdered Hiempsal and Adherbal fled to Rome (Lintott 1994: 29–31; Whittaker 1996: 593–6). Ammianus may have recycled this trope of family to describe the political realities of his own day. Whether "real" or not, however, family mattered, whether it be a model drawn from classical authors like Sallust or a biological reality.

Family and Power II: Power Struggles in the Vandal Royal House

For the Vandals, since the time when they gained possession of Libya, used to indulge in baths, all of them, every day, and enjoyed a table abounding in all things, the sweetest and best that the earth and sea produce. And they wore gold very generally, and clothed themselves in the Medic garments, which now they call '*seric*', and passed their time, thus dressed, in theatres and hippodromes and in other pleasurable pursuits, and above all else in hunting. And they had dancers and mimes and all other things to hear and see which are of a musical nature or otherwise merit attention among men. And the most of them dwelt in parks, which were well supplied with water and trees; and they had great numbers of banquets, and all manner of sexual pleasures were in great vogue among them.

(Proc., *BV* 4.6.5–14)

Victor of Vita and Procopius, our main sources concerning the Vandals, commonly employed the motif of Roman versus barbarian in their narratives (Steinacher 2013: 469–74). The bishop Victor did this in defense of the Catholic Church and Procopius to justify the Justinian's war. But Procopius accused the Vandals (in contrast to the Moors) of acting like wealthy Roman aristocrats. And indeed, Richard Miles and Andrew Merrills have paralleled

such sentiments in recently describing the Vandal aristocrat Arifridos as “a late Roman dandy”, buried in the basilica of Thuburbo Maius (Merrills and Miles 2010: 83; see Steinacher 2016: 270–72).

It is true that the Vandal elite replaced Africa’s ruling senatorial and curial classes in the fifth century and many behaved like members of the region’s traditional aristocracy. The royal family of the Hasdings appropriated the imperial domains in Africa as well as many senatorial estates. But how Geiseric specifically changed the land tenure system and the basic economic and social conditions of the region remain matters of debate (Goffart 2010; Modéran 2012; Tedesco 2012; for its relation to marriage and marriage law, see Steinacher 2014 and 2016: 164–66). And whatever changes the king put into place, Geiseric managed to accumulate enough property to enable his family to become “major players” in the Mediterranean from the mid-fifth century until the kingdom’s demise in the 530s.

Part of Geiseric’s success depended on actively involving all of his sons in organizing this newly acquired property. After a rebellion of Vandal nobles in 442, no external power threatened the royal family. But Geiseric’s son Huneric (reigned 477–84) had powerful rivals among his own relatives. After Geiseric got rid of his competitors within the army, the family itself became the battleground for power struggles in the Vandal Kingdom. Part of this shift was due to imperial connections. When Geiseric had attacked Rome in 455, he brought back Licinia Eudoxia, widow of Valentinian III, and her daughters, Eudocia and Placidia, to Carthage. The elder daughter Eudocia was married to Huneric (Steinacher 2016: 198–200; Eudocia: *PLRE* II:407–8). The match gave Huneric and his son Hilderic (reigned 523–33) a much stronger political presence and authority than a mere “barbarian” king.

Huneric initially had an opportunity to be accepted by both his Vandal and North African subjects – and even by the Catholic Church. His persecution of Manichaeans met with approval from Nicene Christians; it was, after all, what was expected of a pious ruler. After 24 years, he permitted the ordination of a Catholic bishop in Carthage. Such efforts had little impact upon the Vandal elite, however, and may well have been met with resistance. Victor notes executions within the royal family and the exile of others. Huneric’s brother Theoderic died in exile and his wife and son were killed. The Arian patriarch Jucundus was burned in public because he had served as Theoderic’s advisor at court; many nobles close to Theoderic were also persecuted – some burned alive and others more simply executed. Huneric also exiled Godagis, the son of his younger brother Genton. Victor reports that Huneric even deprived Geiseric’s *comitatus*, a group of his father’s closest advisors, of all power (Steinacher 2013: 470; Vict. Vit. 2.2–6, 12–16; see also Merrills 2010: 143–5; Merrills and Miles 2010: 74–7; Howe 2007: 56–78; Courtois 1954: 16–7; Costanza 1964: 223–41; Costanza 1980: 230–68).

But there may have been a more concrete reason for these events. Huneric had

also tried to convince North Africa's Catholic bishops to support a change in Geiseric's succession order in favor of his son, Hilderic, and this probably facilitated the internal turmoil. Victor of Vita stressed that the violence within the royal family and the leading circles of the Vandals was explicitly motivated by Huneric's dynastic goals. The king's desire for his own son to follow him broke with Geiseric's rule of agnatic seniority in matters of succession.

It may be, however, that Victor associated succession issues with this royal purge in order to gloss over broader resistance to the royal house and Huneric's rule. Securing the position of his son might have been only of secondary importance. Victor's interest in the violence within the royal house and the Vandal aristocracy was intended to highlight the barbarity and cruelty of Huneric and his followers. But by casting Huneric's political activities as dynastic pretensions violating the *constitutio* of Geiseric, Victor also managed to present the king as an illegitimate ruler even under the rules of Vandal governance (Steinacher 2013: 470; Merrills 2010: 143–8). After all, in the end, Huneric did not prevail: his nephew Gunthamund acceded to the throne. Other circles within the Vandal elite prevailed and the followers of Huneric's policy may have been persecuted themselves (on possible followers, see Claude 1974: 34, cf. Merrills 2004: 145–62).

Conclusion

We have tried to connect two related, but different phenomena with one another: families and dynasties. The latter combines family patterns of kinship, marriage, and the transmission of wealth with political power. The case studies presented here – spanning a broad time period between the first century BCE and the sixth century CE, and crossing social, political, and class distinctions – demonstrate similar patterns and concerns within North African society. In particular, we have focused on families and their troubles in maintaining the integrity of familial properties, as well as an analogous dynastic concern in gaining and/or defending political supremacy in a transforming Roman world.

Land ownership and property transmission serve as a universal link between Roman African families, rich and poor, over approximately six centuries. That said, there is neither a genuine African family model nor even an identifiable dominant model for any one period. Roman and native forms appear side by side; despite Roman rules of succession, for example, native African practices like Levirate marriage continued. Admittedly, our sources must restrict these conclusions.

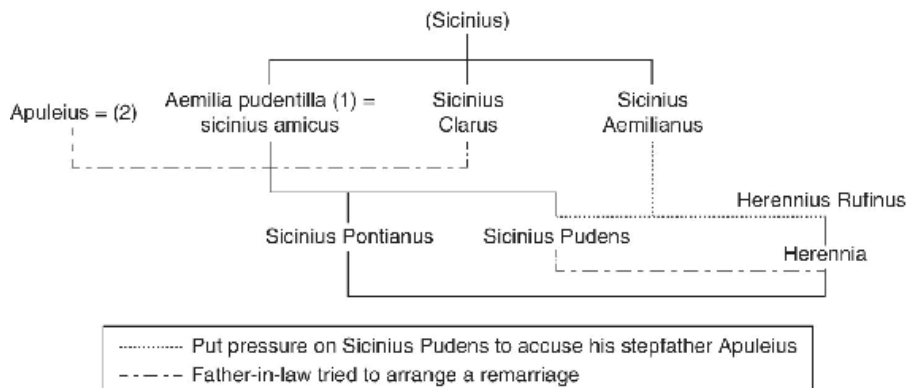
Each era's examples, however, made manifest common family concerns. Apuleius's marriage to a wealthy widow highlighted the potential threats to a patrimony and the transmission of property with the appearance of an interloper. His case raised typical fears about inheritable property and the directions a conflict between members of a local African elite family could take. Even wealthy families might depend on both small and large landholdings. As with Egypt, Sicily, and Sardinia, North Africa was one of the important agrarian regions of the Roman Empire; families tried to ensure continuity and financial stability there, in part by concentrating and re-concentrating their property within closely knit kin groups.

By the third century, African society not only became largely Christian, but also an important center for religious activity and thought. Christian authors, especially Augustine of Hippo, forged a new doctrine and ideology of marriage at variance with traditional moral and legal views, to say nothing of the relations between women and men. At the same time, the most basic principles of private law related to inheritance and the status of heirs remained unchanged. Custom, religious imperative, and Roman jurisprudence all centered around the integrity of the family and its continuation from one generation to the next.

Lastly, the Moorish and Vandal dynasties of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries were central in the power struggles that transformed the Roman world in Late Antiquity. They were Christians and often more Roman than we tend to think. But family mattered to them, whether it be a literary fiction or a historical fact. It is more likely than not that Nubel's "sons" were powerful African political figures, only depicted as brothers by Ammianus, where family was used as a convenient template to present complex political realities. In the case of the new elite, the Vandal royal dynasty, the power struggle was presented as a conflict between different branches of this family and shaped the political history of the age. Whether Moorish princes or Vandal kings, however, the integrity of a family's assets and the passage of those assets from one generation to the next remained part of a larger, collective North African concern.

Appendix

Stemma of family relations after Apuleius' Apology



Family properties in Lamasba (only those who are used in the text) after CIL VIII Suppl. 2 18587

<i>Family Apuleii</i>	<i>Plotnumber</i>	<i>Size</i>
Heirs of Apuleus	1.3	117 K
Faustinus		
Apuleus Processus (eldest son?)	1.6	220 K
Apuleus Rogatianus	1.4	110 K
Apuleus Africanus	1.5	110 K
Apuleus Rogatus	4.13	150 K
<i>Family Germanii</i>		
Germanius Petronianus	2.13	420 K
Germania Gastula	2.12	803 K
Germanius Dentilianus	2.14	440 K
Germanius Valentianus	2.16	430 K
	4.7	664 K
Heirs of Germanius Petronianus	4.6	620 K
Germanius Valens	4.5	609 K
<i>Family Dentilii</i>		
Dentilius Senex	2.10	300 K
Dentilius Maximus	2.11	340 K
<i>Joint ownership</i>		
Fuficius Felix (and) Fuficius Priscianus	2.9	360 K
Fuficius Felix (and) Fuficius Priscianus	4.15	600 K

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Part IV
Late Antiquity

Extended Family in the Experiences of Ausonius and Libanius

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Introduction: Setting the Problem

Over his long career as a correspondent, the bishop Ennodius of Pavia wrote extensively to and about members of his extended – indeed, one might say attenuated – family. One of the things that distinguishes the prolific correspondent's *epistolae familiares* was the claim to a bewildering number of kin, both living and dead (e.g., *Epp.* 9, 12, 17, 34, 48, 52, 59, 60, 69, 81–4, 109, 132, 150, 158, 177, 210, 219, 225, 261, 263, 268, 285, 313, 319, 363, 412, 452, 455, 457 and 459). The second volume of *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* lists his many relations, by no means completely enumerated, under Ennodius' entry (*PLRE ii*: 393–4; and *stemma* 19 and 23). Yet in spite of his claimed extended kinship, it has not escaped the attention of modern scholars that he was at times calculatingly and explicitly vague on the nature of many of those relations (T. Mommaerts and Kelley 1992: 114; Kennell 2000: 131–2). *Parentes*, *adfines*, *proximi* and other such elusive terms pepper his personal missives. Such ambiguity has been occasionally been looked upon as a tacit acknowledgment of tenuous degrees of relation, but it perhaps underscores a salient truth: that the nature of extended relations raises a problem with constructing meaningful notions of sanguinity to those outside immediate family members or household (see Kennell 2000: 128–69).

Attempts to understand and recognize distinctive roles and characteristics of extended kin relations in both pre-modern and modern Europe have proven notoriously difficult. While some anthropologists and historians have articulated the conditions necessary for extended and joint family cohabitation in a number of societies past and present, scholars rarely attempt to treat holistically the nature of relations between various members of an extended family network (e.g., Pasternak, Ember, and Ember 1976; Flannery 2002; see also Wallace-Hadrill 1988). In the specific case of the ancient world, discussion on the subject has largely come from archaeologists, epigraphers, and papyrologists. For example, Wendy Closterman, using Attic *periboloi*, has suggested that funerary inscriptions in Classical Athens treated the idea of

family in the most inclusive sense of the word and emphasized that concept over generations and degrees of sanguinity as a mechanism for indicating a family's "success" (Closterman 2007). Eleanor Dickey, examining the use of familial language in Egyptian papyri between the third century BCE and the third century CE, has described the way figurative kinship terms operated where kinship was tentative, unclear or even non-existent (Dickey 2004: 131–76). And of course, we should mention – as a negative example perhaps – the now classic article by Richard Saller and Brent Shaw that in part inspired this collection, which de-emphasized the role extended and joint kin might have played amongst Romans (Saller and Shaw 1984; see also Shaw 1984).

One notable exception in ancient studies on extended family has been the work of Maurizio Bettini. In 1986, he published *Antropologia e cultura romana*, subsequently translated into both English and German (Bettini 1991 and 1992). In three separate studies, Bettini applied structuralist approaches to "problems" in philology. Each were disparate and were meant to demonstrate the ways cultural anthropology might be applied to the field of Classics. The first of these studies has garnered considerable attention in the Anglophone scholarship: a discussion of kinship systems in Roman linguistic and conceptual formulations of extended kin. Using the approaches found in the works of Lévi-Strauss and Radcliffe-Brown and in part following Bremmer (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 29 ff. and 1969; Radcliffe-Brown 1975 Bremmer 1976 and later 1983), Bettini approached the question of extended relations in a tradition that emphasized the importance of Roman law and language as it pertained to the religious and legendary traditions of that society. Philology thus served as analogue to field work in cultural anthropology – a topic to which Bettini has recently returned (Bettini 2009).

In his study, Bettini specifically focused on the ways paternal and maternal uncles and aunts were used and understood as cultural markers within the family. In his exploration of each of these relations, he observed that the agnatic relations were often characterized by severity and a certain degree of emotional detachment, while the cognatic uncle and aunt seemed to display affection and closer involvement with their sister's children. These distinctions, Bettini contended, did not exist separately from more concretely defined familial roles. As he summarized (Bettini 1991: 107):

... "fathers" and "mothers" in Roman culture form an opposed pair not only in the family nucleus, father/mother, but also in the more general, and more overtly and immediately social context of the paternal group (*agnati*) and the maternal group (*cognati*).

Bettini thus argued that broader notions of paternal and maternal traits applied to more distant relations. It was an earnest attempt, as he concludes, to "reintegrate into a single explanation the diverse motives we have been finding one after another in the affective system as we discover differing but

complementary rules” (Bettini 1992a: 112).

Although Bettini’s theory is in many ways one of the clearest and broadest articulations of an affective principle in relation to kin extending past the nuclear family or household, reaction to this formulation has been mixed and not entirely positive. One of the earliest criticisms came in a review article written by Keith Bradley in 1993, where he mentions in passing the problematic nature of taking the literature (particularly that which refers to an earlier period) as indicative of “authentic archaic social conditions” (Bradley 1993: 239). Susan Treggiari in her review of Bettini’s book echoed in greater specificity Bradley’s questions concerning the adequacy of the evidence presented (Treggiari 1993).

In particular and most extensively, however, Richard Saller enlarged upon these concerns to a much greater degree and explicitly criticized Bettini’s methodology and its inherent assumptions (Saller 1997). Saller took particular exception to the way in which structuralist anthropological approaches to understanding social organization have depended too much on the legal material defining and describing family. Saller noted, tying it to his broader concerns about the use of law in social history, that *matertera* and *amita* were not common terms used in the classical period and as such all cultural “meanings” associated with them must be considered with greatest skepticism (Saller 1997: 21, 24). Indeed, he comes dangerously close to implying that Bettini has made up this “good evidence” (Bettini 1992a: 68). Even in the clearest component of the legal material – testamentary rules – Saller makes the case that these were malleable in the classical period of Rome and there was no clear, definitive principle favoring either agnatic or cognatic kin; and even the rules of intestacy do not offer a sound basis for analysis. Perhaps Saller’s strongest critical statement is the simplest: that in reality, most Romans had an “incomplete set of living kin” (Saller 1997: 32; on family terminology, Saller 1999: 182–97). As such, this reality prevented any firm ideological construct of extended kin relations from taking root and by extension from modern scholars trying to reconstruct one. He concludes in his final footnote that, based on the earliest literary material, there simply is no evidence for a formulated kinship system in Roman society, either in the archaic or classical period (Saller 1997: 34, n. 30; Saller also notes that the divergence between law and legal terminology and social relations in the Classical Era may not be a divergence at all, but separateness that extends to an earlier period).

Bettini himself responded a few years later, suggesting that Saller’s criticisms have failed to better consider the connection between the social and cultural information found in the ancient texts and the narrative qualities of those texts themselves (Bettini 2002). His answer to Saller’s critique thus served as a methodological defense of his thesis rather than a direct answer to the specific conclusions he drew in his study.

Both sides have had their partisans, many of them echoing Saller's skepticism. I have mentioned two of the initial criticisms to Bettini's approach and conclusions in the book's initial reviews. Other reviewers have had similar concerns. Tamsyn Burton, for example, not only worried about the historicizing of the Archaic Period, but also a broader tendency to treat Roman culture as "monolithic" (Burton 1988; cf. Kubiak 1992 and Pöschl 1988). And in the wake of Saller's 1997 discussion, others have echoed his concerns. Penelope Allison, for example, similarly questions the theoretical basis for Bettini's argument (Allison 2001: 200). Matthew Roller has suggested that perhaps the disagreement over approach is as much one about terminology as it is about substance, and has argued that a more semiotic, "non-comparative" framework can yield a better appreciation of culture – including, we may presume, cultural understandings of kin (Roller 2007). This, understandably, can only be read as an implicit criticism of Bettini's comparative approach.

On the other hand, Bettini has had his supporters, if at times indirectly. Halvor Moxnes' introduction to his edited collection on constructing early Christian families, recognizing the dearth of both literary and archaeological data on that topic, is sympathetic to Bettini's structuralism (Moxnes 1997: 34–5). Ann-Cathrin Harders in her study on Roman brother-sister relations – an article which in part informs this chapter – also draws upon on Bettini's approach (Harders 2005: 63 and 67). Jochen Martin has made extensive use of Bettini's work in his own discussion of social control in the Republic (Marten 2002: 157–61). And Uwe Walter is also comfortable with Bettini's paternal/maternal binary in its particular relation to fatherhood in Roman historiography, as is Christian Laes in his recent book on Roman children (Walter 2004: 422 and Laes 2011: 12–13). Significantly, in his last book dealing with the topic of Roman family, Bettini himself makes no specific mention of the controversy surrounding his claims, although he devotes considerable space to defending his basic methodology (Bettini 2009: 139–81).

Test Cases

The debate to a large extent remains unresolved and it does not fall within the purview of this chapter to resolve this argument definitively. What might further the discussion, however, would be to apply Bettini's observations and conclusions to actual persons. In examining extended kin, the observations of (by necessity) aristocratic males towards their own respective families – and they towards them – would offer several opportunities for recasting the question. First, while not necessarily providing a set of consistent attitudes towards specific family members or even family in general, it would

nevertheless provide a continuum of thought where both personal opinion and broader cultural patterns might be discerned and profitably compared. Second, the choice of looking at individuals from a given era would provide fixed temporal, spatial and social loci, from which we may more effectively understand the limits of this exercise, but also be able to draw a more definitive assessment. Finally, by looking at their attitudes and assumptions about their respective families and the concept of extended kin, more complex opinions about networks of relations can offer new directions in which to take this debate.

There are several excellent candidates for examination. From classical Rome, for example, both Cicero and Pliny the Younger wrote copiously about and to relations of various degrees (as well as the sometimes quite complex family situations of their respective acquaintances). In Late Antiquity, Augustine, Sidonius Apollinaris, John Chrysostom, and Ennodius all spoke at length about and often to family.

While all have their advantages, I think given the volume's interest in the Mediterranean family, two men from geographically and linguistically different areas of the Empire would be useful, and individuals roughly contemporary with one another: the fourth century Gallic poet, Decimius Magnus Ausonius, and the rhetor and sometime philosopher, Libanius. For Ausonius, the choice is obvious: as M. K. Hopkins noted in an article over 50 years ago, "The description Ausonius has given us of his family ... in the mid-fourth century is exceptional among our sources because of its detail and completeness" (Hopkins 1961: 239). To the degree we can speak of a "full set of kin" (to paraphrase Saller's definitive criticism; Saller 1997: 33–4) – vertically, horizontally and in some cases to a degree of relation problematic even in the Roman world – Ausonius' poetry and letters are unparalleled (Laes and Voulanto this volume). Material from his great poem, the *Parentalia* – a work that includes 30 elegies of departed family members – will dominate this study. As for Libanius, while we know considerably less about his extended relations, his *First Oration* (often called his "autobiography") offers much about his opinions concerning the nature of family life, and to see how he perceived extended family or kin outside the boundaries of the nuclear family and/or household. That he also mentions many of his more distant relations in his autobiography and his surviving 1,544 letters makes him more useful than other possible choices.

There are also useful sociopolitical parallels in the lives of Ausonius and Libanius. The two were contemporaries, and both must have known of one other – at least by reputation: the Gallic aristocrat Siburius, for example, was a correspondent with Libanius (*Eps.* 663, 973, 982 and 989) who came to prominence through Ausonius' offices (Sivan 1993: 134 and 140). Moreover, both were members of the elite and amongst the *literati*. Their respective homes – southern Gaul and Antioch – although found on opposite sides of the

Mediterranean world, possessed strong local identities with long (if perhaps partially imagined) histories (Vuolanto 2010; on Libanius, Wintjes 2005: 45–53). They thus were exposed to regional practices that predated or resisted Roman cultural impact. Moreover, each could be boast similar personal experiences: Ausonius was a member of the regional aristocracy adlected into the Senatorial aristocracy through his connections to the house of Constantine; Libanius, although resistant to a public life and honors, nevertheless operated in those circles between Antiochene politics and the Eastern Imperial court.

That said, there are some differences, both in their lives and the written record they leave behind. Their perspectives on their own lives and events, as detailed by R. P. H. Green, were widely different from one another, and thus make an interesting contrast in reactions to similar social circumstances (Green 1985). Ausonius' family was largely a story of advancement and success; Libanius' one of past and present struggle. Ausonius was a lukewarm Christian; Libanius an ardent pagan. Ausonius' works focus on emotion; Libanius' on the practical problems of family.

Finally, from a linguistic perspective, Green offers equivalents to the terms examined by Bettini, although not precise analogues. In general, terms for male relatives seem to be better defined than those of female ones, and the masculine over the feminine. *πάτρωζ* (or *γένναζ*) and *μήτρωζ* (occasionally *πατροκασιγνήτοζ*) refer paternal and maternal uncles. The word *θητιζ* can be a generic form for aunt, but seems etymologically to imply a paternal relation. There is also the rarified *πατροκασιγνήτη*. Finally, maternal aunts seem to be understood as being something distinct, but there is no special word for it; instead, ungainly phrases like “the brother of his mother” (John 19:25) seem to be more common. There are also other specialized terms for family (for example, *πενθερός* – father-in-law), but also generic equivalents to *parentes*, *proximi*, and *adfines*, notably *χωρωστήζ* (relatives), *κληρόνομοζ* (heir) and *κηδεστήζ* (in-laws) (see Miller 1953 for terminology).

In sum, taken together, these men's observations can address specifically those claims Bettini made – whether an extended kin model conforms to the maternal/paternal binary he proposed – and if not, whether there might be a prevailing pattern that we might tie to a “Mediterranean” model? That is, can we speak of elite opinion and feeling towards extended kin as a representative of broader attitudes and practices in the Mediterranean world? Or, as Saller contends, can we speak of such a model at all?

The Control Group: Immediate Family

To understand extended kin, however, it is worth saying something briefly in regards to these men's attitudes towards immediate family as a baseline for

comparing other kin whose connections were more distant. These fall into three groups: parents, siblings, and wife and children.

Starting with father and mother, the generalized ideals of parental responsibility and filial piety were universally expressed. In Ausonius' case, the *Parentalia* covers father and mother first, and it is a duty – *cura* – to remember them. In the case of his father, the poet makes it clear it is the natural order of things that a father should be commemorated first (*Par.* i:2). Ausonius not only thanks him for caring and raising him, but also for acknowledging him at birth. Natural affection and devotion are emphasized, qualities rearticulated in another poem to dedicated Ausonius' father on the occasion of the elder Ausonius becoming a grandfather (*Ep.* 19; all letters based on H. G. E. White's numeration – see Green 1991: xli–xlix, 606–7). Of his mother, the poet echoes familiar, perhaps even clichéd virtues: *lanifica*, *pudicitia*, *fides*, *gravis* – all in considerable brevity (*Par.* ii:5). Indeed, her role as mother is barely mentioned (Green 1991: 273–4).

Libanius' recollections of parents are an inversion of Ausonius', but they rearticulate notions of filial piety. As his father had died in 314, when he was ten or 11, his comments are relatively brief: he was described as compassionate, supporting his sisters who apparently became spinsters because of the financial fallout of his family's political misfortunes (*Or.* 1:3). He married a woman of whom Libanius speaks a great deal. Although emotional and often lacking the strictness a boy needed, she protected her sons' modest inheritances from unscrupulous guardians and managed to pay for their schooling (*Or.* 1:4). Nor did she remarry and put their patrimonies at risk (*Or.* 1:7). Her attempts to secure Libanius' marriage came to naught, for which she was disappointed, but clearly saw that as her duty (*Or.* 1:13). Both mother and father interestingly are unnamed.

We see a similar alignment in the matter of siblings: Ausonius' sister, Aemilia Melania, and his brother, Avitianus both died young, the former in infancy and only briefly mentioned (*Par.* xxix). Avitianus made it to adolescence and was well loved – Ausonius said his younger brother was like a son – but Fate had snatched him away (*Par.* xiii:4–7). Of his third sibling, Dryadia, who lived to 60, Ausonius is more fulsome. She had not only the *virtus* of Roman matrons – *pudens*, *boni mores*, *colu tueri* – but also (unnamed) traits that many men lacked, dying as a widow in her father's house (*Par.* xii: 10–12).

Like his parents, Libanius fails to mention his two brothers' names. But like Ausonius, he clearly connects time of contact with closeness. Of his elder brother, nothing is really known, Libanius saying that he had died some time before (*Lib.*, *Or.* i:97). But of his younger brother, we have a heart-rending description of his illness (apparently a stroke) and death, and perhaps equally important the death's mental and emotional impact upon Libanius (*Or.* i:197–204, 213). He was unprepared for his passing and bore it ill.

Finally, to wife and children, the relationship is clearly more complex. Although Ausonius' sadness about his wife Attusia's premature death 35 years earlier seems real and heartfelt, he mentions only her high birth and a list of qualities curiously similar to those of his mother: *lacta, pudica, gravis, genus inclita et inclita forma* (*Par.* ix:23). The brief mention of one son late in the *Parentalia* is perhaps more understandable: he died a toddler. But to his second and still living son, Hesperius, we have other sources, including a draft letter written shortly after the young man's departure from home for a year (*Ep.* xx, but see above). Here, Ausonius laments his son's absence, missing his company and meekly asking his son to mourn him properly should he die before he returns (*Ep.* xx: 20–1). Absent in any of his poetry is any explicit mention of a daughter who bore him many grandchildren (including Paulinus of Pella; *PLRE* i:677–8 and Coşkun 2002: 158–62).

Libanius, of course, had no wife – such a hindrance being antithetical to the philosopher's life – but he had a slave woman who seemed to have served very much in the same capacity (*Eps.* 169 and 188). When she died at an advanced age and after a long and painful illness, Libanius expressed great pain at the loss, stating that she was worth a great many servants (*Or.* i:278) – rather ruining it in modern eyes. She also bore him a son, Cimon Arabius, whose education and status as heir were as important to him as anything else. He appears in numerous letters, often with Libanius serving as an unwilling advocate in Arabius' (failed) political ambitions (e.g., *Eps.* 625, 678, 731, 844, 959, 1000–3, 1042, 1048–51, 1058, 1063–4). Of greatest concern, however, was Libanius' attempt to secure his “natural” son (νόθος) as his heir – made more difficult by changing rules for inheritance: Valentinian I and Valens had allowed illegitimate sons to be partial heirs in *CTh* iv:6:4 (371), but that was rescinded by Theodosius I in *CTh* iv:6:5 (381). The Antiochene *curiales* suggested that the wealth be transferred while Libanius still lived, thus raising him to decurial status in 388 (*Or.* xxxii:7). His death in 391 was an even harder blow to Libanius – a lament frequently mentioned in his letters (see esp., *Eps.* 1036–9 and 1048–51).

These brief sketches as a whole then form a set of tropes consistent with normative upper-class male attitudes about family. While there are details specific to these individuals, we see traditional piety towards parents – even in cases where there was not much to praise. Women within the household are properly subservient, displaying set moral qualities, although religious piety in Christian family life was admittedly something new (Nathan 2000: 153–4 and Clark 1994: 119). For men, both authors not only express their virtues, but also emotion between brothers, fathers and sons. As heirs and successors, fathers are cast as protectors and advisors to their male children. Thus, the relationship is as heavily emphasized as the person himself.

Paternal and Maternal Uncles and Aunts

When we turn to relations that extend beyond the immediate household, we should start with those relations Bettini considered in his study some 25 years ago. Of his *avunculus*, the rhetor, Ausonius remembers at length and enthusiastically the man who was, as he describes it, his third parent. Uniquely, Arborius is named both a father and a mother (*pater et genetrix*), since he was both a loving protector and mentor; and that because of him, Ausonius became an honor to his family (*"clarum decus esse," Par. iii:21–2*). Arborius thus in one person formed a second pair of parents. In contrast, his *patrui*, Contemtus and Calippio, are relegated to a single elegy, and are considerably more distant. The former, a merchant whom Ausonius probably did not personally know, died in Britain; and the latter, while pleasant (*comus blandusque*) and making Ausonius his heir, actually left him nothing (*Par. vii*).

As for aunts, Ausonius possessed two on either side. Hilaria and Dryadia, his *materterae*, are both called mothers by him; and in the case of the Dryadia, it seems as if she actually filled in as a surrogate mother (*"Discebas in me, matertera/mater uti fieres" Par. xxv:9–10*). In real terms, this probably meant that Dryadia and his maternal grandmother took on temporary responsibility when he left to study with Arborius (Green 1991: 303) instead of a true surrogacy for a deceased mother (Laes and Vuolanto, this volume). And because Hilaria was a dedicated virgin, the poet felt it necessary as her closest male descendant to make offerings as if he were her son (*vice filii*). Like his paternal uncles, Ausonius' *amitae*, Cataphronia and Veneria, are more remote. Cataphronia was also vowed to virginity, pleasant if distant, but willing to leave what wealth she had to her paternal nephew (*"de paupere summa ... adtribuit," Par. xxvi:5–6*). Veneria, apparently unknown to Ausonius in life, is merely acknowledged in death.

Ausonius, too, was himself an *avunculus* and *patruus*. Several of his commemorations are to avuncular nieces and nephews, including a niece-in-law and nephew-in-law. In the case of both in-laws, the elegies are relatively long. Moreover, he describes each in terms of his own children. The poet lauds his niece-in-law Veria Liceria's famous great-grandfather, Eusebius, and claims a virtual kinship with him (possibly the historian, *PLRE i:301*; see Green 1981: 230); his niece's husband, Paulinus, is remembered for his curial pedigree and many civic offices. Of his actual nephew, Herculanus, Ausonius' elegy seems to suggest a relationship similar to the one between the poet and his own uncle, Arborius – along with all that implies. Contrasted against all this is one elegy as a *patruus* to Talisius, mentioned above: Ausonius in one of his shortest elegies can only tersely console the young man's father that at least he left a son and thus did not really die prematurely (*Par. xx:5–6*).

Turning now to Libanius, while he did not possess a *πατρώς*, he did have two

maternal uncles, Panolbius and Phasganius. Both men, like Arborius, were rhetors, and whom Libanius greatly praises, although he admits that Panolbius was not as good as his younger brother (*Or.* lxii:31). Regardless of their skills, he has particularly warm feelings for both men, since after his father died, they took over a *de facto* guardianship for him and his two brothers (*Or.* x:91–13) – a decision perhaps motivated by his mother’s distrust of a legally appointed guardian (“ἐπίτροπος” *Or.* i:4). To Phasganius, Libanius seemed particularly close: he supported Libanius’ decision to (temporarily?) spurn offers of marriage and go study in Athens – no doubt a reflection of his interest in his rhetorical training and future (*Or.* i:12–13). One of these two men – we may assume Phasganius – indulgently took young Libanius to the gladiatorial games in absence of his father (*Or.* i:5). His death meant that he would no longer be able to share his professional successes with his uncle (*Or.* i:117). Indeed, Phasganius, even left Libanius his house as an inheritance (despite having his own son), partially regaining the wealth lost from his family’s personal circumstances (*Ep.* 115). And perhaps most interesting, it seems as if Phasganius had chosen his unnamed daughter to become Libanius’ spouse (*Or.* i:95) – a topic about which we shall say more below.

Libanius had two maternal aunts, both married to his mother’s brothers. We only know of Panolbius’ wife, Bassiana, mentioned in only a few circumstances. Nothing is known of her except in passing (*Ep.* 1409). She apparently possessed a certain grandness: he refers to her as that “excellent” Bassiana (*Ep.* 544). We also know that she needed to be reassured that her son, Spectatus, was arranging a suitable marriage for his niece and Bassiana’s granddaughter – comfort that Libanius apparently provided in person (*Ep.* 630; apparently, *Ep.* 642) – and that she lived to a ripe old age (*Ep.* 116). But more than that, we know little. Of his paternal aunts (we are not even sure of how many), we only know that his father supported the two and they died unmarried (*Or.* i:3) – probably because they had little or no dowry to secure a union.

Libanius’ brothers, like him, seemed to have produced no legitimate issue, since he mentions no nephews nor nieces, so he never served in the role of uncle. That said, he does mention, noted above, that his cousin, Spectatus arranged for the marriage of his niece after his brother-in-law had died (*Ep.* 630; see also *Ep.* 1364). It suggests a sort of care and obligation in his sister’s children’s affairs similar to Ausonius’ uncle Arborius.

Other Extended Kin

What evidence is there of other blood relations? In the case of his maternal grandparents, we see a curious analogue to Ausonius’ father and mother: an extended elegy to Arborius, his grandfather, seen as a protector and indeed

having apparently some sort of secret divination concerning his unborn grandson's future greatness; and a much shorter piece to Maura, an *avia ad perpendicularum*, at once *blanda* (*Par.* v:8) and *sub austeris ... inperitiis* (*Par.* v:10)! Is there anything about his grandson, Pastor? His tragic death after being hit with a carelessly thrown roof tile is compared to a mortal blow to Ausonius' own head. His only cousin, Julia Idalia, the poet describes as a contemporary and thus almost his sister. And his niece's children, Paulinus and Dryadia, both of whom seemed to have died in adolescence, finish off those connected by blood. As *patruus magnus* (grand-uncle; a term not used), Ausonius mourned both as if they were his own children, but especially the boy as he showed promise of great eloquence ("*ac us natorum tamquam diligo progenium*"; *Par.* xxiii:11–12).

The remaining seven *neniae* in the *Parentalia* collectively show greater variation to various in-laws and their commemorations. Perhaps the most touching is to his father-in-law, Attusius, a man devoted to *otium*, who never lived to see the marriage of his daughter (*Par.* viii:7–8). Remembering both, Ausonius notes that though each had passed away, he refuses to give up his status of son-in-law and husband. The parents of his son-in-law (*consocres*), Severus Censor Iulianus and Pomponia Urbica, memorialized in two separate elegies, were practically strangers: the former he never knew, the latter barely. Yet Iulianus is compared to the Frugi of old, Cato the Censor, and Aristides; Pomponia to Tanaquil and Theano (the disciple or wife of Pythagoras). They are together well-born, being compared to immortalized well-born, and (thus) sorely missed. The rest are brothers and sisters-in-law. Sometimes, Ausonius used the metaphor of blood siblings to describe an in-law, as was the case with Namia Pudentilla, *vice sororis* and possessing various (and familiar) virtues (*Par.* xix:1–5). So, too, his sister's husband, Pomponius Maximus, was *vice fratris* and his death was a blow to the *curia* of Bordeaux. But as for another sister-in-law and her husband, recalled in a single elegy, they were almost completely unknown to Ausonius in life; only because the name "Attusia" was so dear to him (*tam cara vocabula*) did he wish to send his poetic condolences (*Par.* xix:1–5).

Libanius also speaks in varying degrees of depth about his more extended blood relatives, and he often employs specialized words for extended kin, although not always referring to his own (for example, ἀνεψιάδῃ and ἀνεψιάδους, first cousin's daughter and son).

His extended family and its misfortunes began with his great-grandfather's political undoing in 303 with Eugenius' short-lived rebellion. His maternal great-grandfather, unnamed, was a man eloquent in Latin (although Libanius heatedly defended he was from Antioch), and like Ausonius' maternal grandfather, skilled at divination. But his fate was to watch his sons put to death by the emperor. Much of their property was confiscated, and as a result Libanius' own father was put into desperate straits (property apparently still

held by the state during Libanius' life; *Ep.* 124:3 and *Or.* 11:158–62). His maternal grandfather, who must have been a close associate, was nearly executed as well. Libanius' praise for all these men focuses on their eloquence and nobility (*Or.* i:3; his paternal grandfather's estate was still being held by the state, i:125).

Of his cousins and their relations, we see expressions of affection. By Phasganius, he had one unnamed female cousin, who we learn may have been an intended bride (*Or.* i:95). She died while he was essentially under house arrest at the imperial court, and would "return to a tomb rather than a wife". It was enough for him to lose all desire to return to Antioch – a strong indication of the affection he had for her and perhaps her father.

By Panolbius, he had two cousins, Spectatus and Theodora. We know more about Spectatus than his other cousins. Joint heir from their mutual uncle, Phasganius, he was the recipient of 30 letters from Libanius (*Eps.* 115 and 116; see also *PLRE* i:850–1). Taken as a whole, there was enormous concern for his career at court and the favors he might provide for family, friends, and fellow Antiochenes, but also clearly wishing him closer at hand (e.g., *Ep.* 352). That they were very close comes through his often insincere tone of detachment. In one letter, for example, he not only requests his help, but also appeals to their mutual γένετᾱι as if they were brothers (*Ep.* 365). Of Theodora, we hear relatively little, except she lived in Antioch and apparently warmly regarded (*Ep.* 328; see also *Ep.* 786). But of her husband, Thalassius, we hear more, significantly in the letter he received from his cousin-in-law. They essentially exhort him to avoid the imperial court and return to Antioch to take up civic duties there (*Eps.* 377 and 387). Significantly, in letter 377, Libanius does not claim kinship exactly, but rather speaks in the *name* of his family on the grounds that they are connected by favors and obligation. He thus assumed almost the role of a father or elder brother, while still denying technical kinship – possibly because Thalassius was Christian (*Ep.* 1364).

Before assessing this menagerie of kin, we should mention finally that Theodora and Thalassius becoming the *consocri* (there is no Greek equivalent) with the Praetorian Prefect Helpidius in 362 put the rhetor in a curious position, both socially and politically: Helpidius and Libanius had been politically estranged (*Ep.* 1410) and the Prefect had moreover come from humble origins (*Or.* xlii:24–5). He was thus under some obligation through this tenuous connection of praising his governorship and career, as well as trying to smooth over their formerly poor relations (*Ep.* 1410; see Bradbury 2004: 44).

Conclusions

What begins to emerge is a far more complex and problematic paradigm of extended family than Bettini envisioned. Indeed, we cannot speak of a unified attitude of opinion. Without question, we do see a general, although by no means universal delineation in attitude and behaviour associated with the kin of fathers versus that of mothers. Perhaps the clearest examples of this comes in Ausonius, as *patrui* and *avunculi*. There is no sentimental language as paternal uncle for Lucanus Talisius, who in the elegy's title is "*eorum filius*" in reference to Ausonius' sister-in-law and husband. The best sentiment he can muster is "*matris spes unica*" (*Par.* xx:1). In contrast, as *avunculus*, he can call his nephew's wife, Liceria, "daughter" (*Par.* xvi:1 : "*sive nurus mihi nomine, vel vice natae*"). And of course we have also recounted the stronger emotional and physical proximity between Ausonius and his mother's family. Libanius had no nieces or nephews, but his maternal uncles provided an interesting mixture of paternal and maternal roles, similar to Ausonius and his *avunculus* – what stands out is an emotional and sentimental connection more akin to his feelings towards a father.

But while Bettini's theory about *agnati* and *cognati* may be in evidence, they are not universal and there are several other important factors at work. Clearly, another and indeed overriding principle must be tied to birth, an important component of aristocratic self-identification. Ausonius' family clearly favors the maternal side, because of its prominence; the onomastic evidence shows other Aemilii and Arborii surviving to his generation and beyond. M. K. Hopkins noted this awareness, but he also concluded they were "not an overriding consideration" (Hopkins 1961: 247). That is almost certainly incorrect. What is in evidence, however, is a broader understanding of social status. As the aristocratic order became increasingly separated legally and perhaps socially from the *humiliores* in the fourth century, and as imperial government drew increasingly from provincial aristocrats, the differences between decurion and senator grew less pronounced. Indeed, Hagith Sivan has argued that the rise of the Gallic elite to imperial prominence and the rise of Ausonius' family go hand in hand (Sivan 1993 and Salzman 2002: 103; cf. Booth 1994).

Likewise, Libanius saw the social fluidity of eastern elites as a means for raising the status of his family and those of his friends – even while eschewing those things themselves (although it is worth noting that in the 380s, the Antiochene philosopher was offered and probably accepted an honorary praetorian prefecture; *Or.* i:219 and xxx:1; cf. Banchich 1985). And like Ausonius, his maternal line is the one he favors in his own self-promotion, and that of his son through extended family. It is his maternal great-grandfather and his sons that are seen as "*καλούς...καὶ μεγάλους καὶ εἰπεῖν ἱκανούς*" (*Or.*, i:3; see also *Or.* xix:45–6 and xx:18–20). It is his uncle, Panolbius, who is described as the president for the liturgy (*ἐλλανοδικός*) of

the Olympic games at Antioch in 328 (*Or.* i:5 and x:9). And both his maternal uncles are rhetors of note (*Or.* lxii:31). But while both he and Ausonius were sensitive to station, neither were snobs. Birth and the potential for greatness were more than sufficient; in some cases – for example, Helpidius – Libanius might even overlook birth.

A final conceptualization of extended kin also comes in the use of metaphorical language relating immediate family members to other relatives. Mothers and fathers, siblings and offspring become the models for more distant relations. In some cases, an individual might be more than one: for example, where age appropriate, a brother might also be described as a son. This is more than a necessity for a surrogate vocabulary in a language where terms for extended kin was limited to a few generic words (*adfinis*, χηρωστής, *gener*, κηδεστής). Its use must also be seen in terms of inclusivity rather than vagueness. Indeed, the language of the *Parentalia* in particular suggests that the problematic distinctions modern anthropology sometimes draws between nuclear/extended, household/extra-household are artificial. Libanius shows similar qualities when describing even quite different kin. The metaphors of parent/sibling/child is a cladistic exercise, creating a binary of family and non-family. Significantly, its absence must also be taken into account. But the usage of such metaphoric language is perhaps a clear place where both Bettini and Saller's arguments intersect: the lack of "complete sets" of relatives both meant that an ideology of extended kin failed to develop and forced writers to create a language drawn from the nuclear family and household.

We see in sum a somewhat more nuanced understanding of kin and kinship and one suggesting binaries quite different from the one envisioned by Bettini. The implications of these men's writings suggest that linguistically and conceptually, there was little distinction made between family within the household and outside of it, nor between immediate family members and those of more distant relation. In that sense, Bettini's model of *agnati* and *cognati* is but one facet of a broader practice where extended relatives were recast as much closer kin, and not even necessarily an essential one. But the question can be raised, at this point, as to whether we can speak of a model for understanding the conceptualization of an extended family network at all. It is true that the interest in inclusivity, at least among the elite of Late Antiquity, was intimately connected to class and often place. But there, similarities end. Each man's experiences differed of course in the details of their lives, but indicate no definitive or uniform pattern within the Mediterranean family of Late Antiquity.

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Household and Family Dynamics in Late Antique Southern Gaul

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Introduction

This is the story of five Christian gentlemen over five generations who all belonged to the aristocracy of southern Gaul in the late Roman Empire: Ausonius (310–93) of Bordeaux; Sulpicius Severus (ca. 363–ca. 425), from Aquitaine; Paulinus (376–after 460), born at Pella in Macedonia but who lived in or near Bordeaux most of his life; Ruricius of Limoges (ca. 440–ca. 510); and Caesarius of Arles (469/70–542). Except for Ausonius, all were ardent Christians; Ruricius and Caesarius were bishops.

In the late fourth century, after half a millennium of Roman domination, southern Gaul was geographically, culturally, and economically an integral part of the Roman Empire. However, the next century witnessed a settlement of different German peoples. Aquitaine fell under Visigothic control as early as the 410s, though independence from the Roman Empire was proclaimed only in 475. Other “barbarian” groups in the south of Gaul with whom the Roman military leaders had to cope included the Alans and the Burgundians. In the last two decades of the fifth century the south of Gaul was relatively well governed by Visigothic and Burgundian kings who legislated, taxed, and used Roman civilian officials. But according to Chris Wickham (2009: 82–8, 111–29), these 20 years were definitively post-imperial: local rulers were not disturbed anymore by the hegemony of distant Ravenna or Rome; imperial unity and identity were by 500 the property of the East alone. Starting in 507, most of southern Gaul was annexed to the realm of the Franks by the 530s. Their rule would emerge as the Merovingian Gaulish kingdom, which lasted until 751.

From the mid-fifth century, increased violence and uncertainty with shifting patterns of fragmented landownership and power structures inevitably influenced social life and experience of it. Gaul had been an underpopulated area with lots of empty space. If we assume 12 million inhabitants, this would imply that roughly only 15 percent of the available space was used. The fifth century saw a drastic decline of the population; the sixth century was one of

demographic revival. Some 80 percent of the population were involved in agriculture, but this does not imply that there were no important cities (Riché 1966). On the contrary, in the year 600 there were 115 *civitates* all over Gaul, each of which had its own bishop. From the late fourth century onward, the new Christian religion gradually took over from the old pagan way of life, though changes were slower in the countryside – where ancient customs survived – than in the cities (Drinkwater and Elton 1992; Wes 1994; Ward-Perkins 2005; Wickham 2009: 111–29).

In this chapter, we will use the writings of five Gaulish aristocrats to reflect upon family dynamics and household structure. We aim, first, to see what the ideal of family life was as presented in their narratives. Second, and more importantly, we will analyze what can be found out about the possible changes in social relations and interaction at family/household level during the period in question. Here, upbringing during the first years of infancy will turn out to be of crucial importance: who was to play an active role in the care and education of young children? Who appeared to have been part of the “caring” household – and what was the role of household slaves in this? Third, the possible function of extended family will be highlighted: what was the role of siblings and relatives, depending on whether they lived as part of the household or not?

Thus, our intention is to discuss possible changes in the Roman family and household structures. Our hypothesis is that among the Late Antique elites not much altered – at least on the ideological side. They wanted to be identified as good Romans (Christians or not), with good Roman values (Sivonen 2006: 141–2, 150–8). However, not only might the idea of proper *romanitas* have changed but also actual social relations in Late Antique Gaul might have differed from what we know about the earlier Roman Empire. Moreover, as the rise of Christian asceticism signified new alternatives also for the offspring of the elite, is this apparent in the roles of the relatives outside the family nucleus? We could assume that if the number of unmarried relatives rose, they could also have a more pronounced role in family dynamics. Also, the role of slaves might have been different in Late Antique ancient households.

Interpreting the Sources

The relevance of this research lies in the fact that our authors have hardly ever been approached with these questions in mind. However, to a social historian of later periods this non-quantitative approach of cherry-picking “interesting” passages from literary sources may appear outdated and naive, while the literary theorist could point to the specificity of each single literary genre, which makes comparisons or generalizations hard to substantiate.

To the first objection on social history we answer that for the period and region concerned there simply are no quantitative sources available. This is a well-known problem for nearly all family history in antiquity. Even in the rare cases when we make use of sources which seem to be apt for quantitative approaches, great caution is needed in order not to be misled by numbers. Thus Sabine Huebner undertook the challenge of comparing household composition as it appears in the inscriptions of Greco-Roman Egypt with what we know from the census data of the same period and region – the inscriptional evidence turned out to be utterly unreliable from a demographical point of view (Huebner 2011). At the same time, social historians need to be aware of the danger of extrapolation or generalization based on insufficient data. Ausonius, for instance, frequently mentions his maternal uncle (*avunculus*) Arborius. It is tempting to understand this emphasis as a relict of Celtic society, in which children were entrusted to their mother's brother who acted as their foster-father from age seven to 14 (Guastella 1980). Sixteen inscriptions for uncles from the *Galliae* and the *Germaniae* also reveal a preponderance of maternal uncles (*avunculi*) over paternal uncles (*patrui*): 12 dedications to the former, four to the latter.

But is such evidence enough to claim the presence of a Celtic substratum in aristocratic circles of late Roman Gaul? After all, Ausonius could have had particular reasons for often mentioning his maternal uncle. Comparisons with contemporary authors or Gaulish writers of former generations are impossible. And the epigraphic evidence, spread over three centuries and a rather vast geographical area, is not convincing either. It therefore seems safer to stick to the assumption that Ausonius was particularly keen to stress his affectionate relationship with Arborius, thereby emphasizing the benefits this familial network offered to him (Zittel 2009: 164–7). It also has to be taken into account that, owing to mortality and differences in the age of first marriage, lower for the elite girls than for elite boys (or rather, young men), mothers had more living siblings and thus it is probable that children would have had more interaction with their maternal than with their paternal relatives (Vuolanto 2015: 96–9, with Saller 1994: 36–41, 54–67 and Scheidel 2001 for earlier Roman Empire and the theoretical basis; also Lelis, Percy and Verstraete 2003).

On the other hand, the literary approach does not exclude the existence of a certain reality behind the sources. Relatives of our informants were real persons once; Ausonius at least had a maternal uncle with whom he shared an affectionate relationship. Ausonius' and Ruricius' letters inevitably reflect the rules of the epistolary genre, but also give precious information on specific family concerns. Sulpicius' hagiographically bent biographical stories had to be embedded in the narrative setting plausible for their audiences. Ausonius' and Paulinus' (auto)biographical poetry is governed by the requirements of the literary genre, but it still has to play with the expectations of its readers

and current sociocultural features. In order to resonate with the audience, the sermons of Caesarius also needed a *Sitz im Leben*. Taken together, even if the individual stories referred to may not reflect faithfully the particular historical episodes they claim to depict, they still supply information on the phenomena and sociocultural patterns in question – at least on what was considered normal and plausible in contemporary culture. Indeed, recent scholarly approaches have supported the use of literary sources for the social history of Late Antiquity (as long as this is done with caution), if only because they are all we have.

Some scholars have already tackled these authors from the sociocultural point of view (Van Dam 1985; Kirsch 1989; Krause 1991; Evans Grubbs 2009; McLynn 2009). Recently, a forceful plea for the use of literary sources for the social history of Late Antiquity has been made by Kyle Harper (2011). He has also highlighted the historical value of homiletic literature to provide remarkable insights into the social history. This kind of material, as well as also the Late Antique autobiographical writing, must be, however, used with caution (Harper 2010; Vuolanto 2013).

We decided to concentrate on these authors and texts in order to present the current study as a starting place for a more comprehensive survey of the family history of Late Antique Gaul. After all, southern Gaul from the fourth to sixth centuries offers a unique variety of letter collections, hagiography and miracle stories, personal poetry, and sermons, that is, sources fit for writing a history of social relations in a family setting. What we aim to do here is to combine and compare examples from these different source genres spanning five generations or one and a half centuries. It is our hope that this enquiry will be the starting point for more systematic and expanded research on similar issues in the future (see Réal 2001 on family in hagiography; Krause 1991 and 1994-1995 on widows and orphans, and Zittel 2009 on family ideology). Besides the chronological framework, the originality of the present study lies in both the exhaustive approach (by the selection of five authors) and the treatment of the specific themes of family ideology, early childhood years, and the role of extended households.

The Protagonists

Before beginning our discussion, it is necessary to briefly introduce our principal informants. Decimius Magnus Ausonius represents our first generation: he was born in 310 in Bordeaux, the son of a local physician, and returned to his native city to teach there for 30 years. In around 364 he was summoned as a famous rhetorician by Emperor Valentinian to be tutor to young Gratian at Trier. This boosted his political career, and he became praetorian prefect in Gaul in 378 and consul in 379. His commemorative

Parentalia, written in old age between 379 and 382, in which he gives a short account of the lives and characters of 30 deceased family members, his diary the *Ephemeris*, and his correspondence will prove to be particularly instructive for the present chapter. Indeed, as Hagith Sivan (1993: 50; see also Coskun 2002 and Ternes 2002 for biographical and prosopographical details) has claimed, “no other Gallic family in late antiquity is as well documented as Ausonius’.”

Sulpicius Severus was born c.363 in Aquitaine into an elite family, and received a profoundly literary education. He married into a consular family; when his wife died, he was strongly influenced by ascetic Christianity through Martin, the bishop of Tours. His later life, spent in the neighborhood of Toulouse, can be described as characterized both by Roman literary *otium* and by Christian ascetic practices. His *Life of St Martin* (written in 399) is a classical piece of Christian hagiographic writing; written a year or two after Martin’s death and its vignettes offer important insights for contemporary everyday life. For the writing of the present chapter, the editions and commentaries by Fontaine (1967–8 and 2006) have been most useful (see also Stancliffe 1983).

Born in Macedonia in 376 during the praetorian prefecture of his father, Paulinus of Pella was most probably a grandson of Ausonius, who took part in his education at Bordeaux. Paulinus played an important role in the negotiations between the local aristocracy and Ataulf, king of the Visigoths. However, as Bordeaux was finally sacked by the Goths in 414, Paulinus lost a good deal of property and left for Bazas. He held office under the puppet emperor Attalus, and later lived for many years in Marseille. In about 460 he returned to Bordeaux to a small estate, where he finished his literary work. His autobiographical work the *Eucharisticon* was meant as a thanksgiving. According to recent research, the composition dates from 460. This remarkable poem is full of personal details and references to misfortune connected to the times of the invasions (McLynn 1995, with Marcone 1995; Coskun 2005; Czech-Schneider 2006; Weber 2007).

Ruricius of Limoges, again of Aquitanian origin, was well connected to the local aristocracy, by birth, by his friendship networks, and by his marriage into a senatorial family. Land belonging to his family was probably situated near Cahors, but he became bishop of Limoges in 484, and his correspondence is one of the chief sources for the elite culture of Visigothic Gaul, especially in the last quarter of the fifth century. In his letters he shows less interest in contemporary political events. Instead, he concentrates on supporting local cultural and family networks (see Settipani 1991, with Mathisen 1999 and Neri 2009 for editions and commentaries).

Finally, Caesarius of Arles was also born to an aristocratic family, in Chalon-sur-Saône. Contrary to his parents’ will, he was ordained as a teenager in 486/7, and soon afterwards decided to live a life of asceticism in the monastic

community of Lérins, near Marseille. Due to his strenuous zeal and harshness of character, he was forced to leave the monastery for the prosperous city of Arles, then part of the Visigothic Empire, in order to join the local clergy. At the relatively young age of 32 or 33 he became a bishop, and embarked on a remarkable diplomatic and ecclesiastical career. In several local councils he put in place important canonical reforms and new monastic rules. Having been initially on good terms with the Visigoth king Alaric II, he was banished to Bordeaux in 505, but allowed to return in 506. When Arles was annexed to the Ostrogothic empire of Theodoric, he was arrested and brought to the king's court at Ravenna in 512/13: again, he was restored to favor. Eventually he died in "his city" (then under Frankish rule) in 542, after serving Arles as a bishop for 40 years. During those years he wrote 238 sermons which cover many aspects of family life in his time (Klingshirn 1994 with editions and commentaries by Morin 1934 and Delage 1971–86).

The information gathered from the writings of these gentlemen will also be supported by texts of other authors who have not been systematically scrutinized. These include most importantly Prosper of Aquitaine, whose *Ad coniugem suam* (ca. 420s?) is an important depiction of the role of family life for an ecclesiastical intellectual of the time, and Sidonius Apollinaris (ca. 430–ca. 485), an aristocrat, poet, politician, and, ultimately, a bishop, who left behind a collection of letters important for the study of social relations in Late Antique Gaul. Salvian (ca. 400–after 470) also came from a notable family. He married but was attached to ascetic ideals. He wrote some letters and two tracts of interest for our study, *De gubernatione Dei* and *De Ecclesia*; eventually he became a presbyter in Marseilles.

The Late Roman Family Ideal in Gaul

In the Roman world, family life ideologically submitted to the will of the *paterfamilias*, the male head of the household. Both his children and his wife were strictly under his control and discipline. The idea of male dominance was to be counterbalanced by mutual *pietas*: an affectionate relationship characterized by mutual responsibilities. For a married couple the ideal was *concordia*, marital harmony and partnership (guaranteed, however, by the obedience and dutifulness of the wife), which also symbolized the unity of society as a whole. On the other hand, as family was understood as a reproductive and economic unit, marriage started as a contract between the families involved (Dixon 1992: 62–71). Likewise, parents were to take care of their offspring during their minority, and children were expected to honor their parents – and take care of them in their old age. In all, the “bonds between husband, wife, and their children were dominant in the Romans’ conception of familial obligation and affection” (Saller 1994: 96 (quote), 105–

Late Antiquity was, naturally, at least partly another world. On the basis of mainly legal evidence, Antti Arjava (1998) has shown that the idea of paternal power (*patria potestas*) persisted in Late Antiquity. On the other hand, Kate Cooper (2007) has claimed that the idea of subjugation of the wife to her husband's authority was increasingly stressed by the sixth century. Simultaneously, the value of the conjugal bond as an unbreakable spiritual tie was strengthened. Thus, marital union created a more binding social relationship between the relatives of the couple than before, and the reproductive function of the marriage itself lost its overwhelming importance. However, as Judith Evans Grubbs (2009: 202, 206, 214, 217) has emphasized, there is no clear answer to what changed in Late Antiquity, or, in other words, to "the question what 'difference' did Christianity make to family relationships and norms." She, however, stresses more continuity than change. Our task, therefore, is to clarify the question by concentrating on a specific geographical area and social class, that is, on the elites of Late Antique Gaul.

To start with, the idea of a nuclear family unit with a male head of household is repeatedly assumed and restated as a current focus of interest and ideology. According to Caesarius, a small family unit consisting of two or three children was the ideal (*Serm.* 52.4). Dealing with the "hierarchy of love and affection," he mentions conjugal love in the first place. Love for one's offspring takes second place, followed by affection for close kin (*amor propinquorum*) and those beyond this (*ultra propinquos*) (*Serm.* 21.2). The love between husband and wife is considered as reciprocal; both long for children who would live in good health (*Serm.* 21.6). In the "hierarchy of alms giving and support" it is again the nuclear family unit (*tibi et tuis*) which has first place, followed by one's parents and one's household slaves (*Serm.* 34.2).

In the correspondence of Ruricius, the rhetoric of paternal power manifesting itself in his relationship with his wife and children comes repeatedly to the fore, both in depicting ideologically proper family roles and in interpreting the role of God towards Christians. As Faustus points out in his letter to Ruricius, piety of the parents manifests itself in a father who uses discipline (and even the "slap of a fatherly right hand"). The "authority of paternal command" did not, however, always make offspring submissive (*Epist.* "Licet per" (SG 1); Mathisen 1999: 95). In these situations the ideal is the father of the prodigal son, who had the right to punish and condemn, but still shows paternal clemency and does not disinherit his child (Ruricius, *Epist.* 1.2). God himself is "a most indulgent *paterfamilias*, one who lays down his life for the sake of his flock," a dutiful father to the faithful and the father of orphans, who grants protection for a widow's children with paternal piety (*paternae pietate*) (Ruricius, *Epist.* 2.23; *Epist.* 2.15). From the children's standpoint, piety and obligation combined with emotional affectivity are constituents of rightful relations towards their parents: *nec iam sola mihi pietas mea suadet amorem*

(Aus. *ad patrem de suscepto filio* 7, with Paul. Pella *Euch.* 176 and 139; Zittel 2009, 167–74).

In regard to the relationship between spouses, the idea of reciprocity is expressed in many contexts. In his love poetry to his wife, Ausonius overturns the conventions of love elegy: the addressee of a Latin amatory poem is usually not the speaker's own wife! (Sklenár 2005–6). Prosper of Aquitaine refers to his wife (*Ad coniugem suam* 1.115–22 (final verses); on the poem, see Mathisen 2003: 102) as his comrade and companion in a battle of faith. He turns around the traditional commonplace, calling his wife a helper (*auxilium*) to him, a weak man (*infirmus*), anxious and grieving – that is, he is characterizing himself with the characters traditional linked to womanly weakness (see Ulpian, *Dig.* 11.1, with Dixon 1984; in Late Antiquity e.g., Lact. *Inst.* 1.16.16; Cypr. *Epist.* 4.2; August. *Divers. quaest.* 61.5; Joh. Chrys. *De Sacerd.* 1.5.), and driven by emotions: chaste marriage means not only a common flesh, but a common mind (*mens*) in spirit, and in this a woman can possess masculine virtues. These rhetorical figures, however, do not turn the proper gender hierarchy upside down at the end. Even if Prosper urges his wife to be a guardian of her guardian, that is, of him, the starting point is still the guardianship (*custodia*) of the husband. The strength of the wife is her (feminine) power of consoling. In the Christian ideal of the struggle for eternal life, a married couple can become an *exemplum* of saintly life only through reciprocal effort. The same ideals we already referred to in Caesarius of Arles (*Serm.* 21.6), and the idea of reciprocity is also found in inscriptions, like in *CIL* 13.128 (350/450, Novempopulana), in which Serena commemorates her deceased husband, referring him as “a comrade of unswerving support” (translation: Mathisen 2003: 44–5).

However, in the Christian discourse, the association between salvation, asceticism, and contempt for kin, especially progeny, was close, and the reciprocity of the marriage tie had to give way to higher ends, if need be. The call of God was to be obeyed over all other things. To picture this precept in a poignant way, ecclesiastical writers such as Sulpicius and Cassian Severus used stories in which contempt for wife and children are depicted as the very manifestations of a proper vocation (Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* 1.22; Cassian, *Conl.* 3.4 (426–8); see also Salv. *Eccl.* 3.2–5). These stories also show the independence of male decision making. Thus, not only do they show the ideological high value given to the family nucleus, but it seems also to have been natural for the male household head to act with free will. Despite this ideological strand, in contexts in which children are dealt with as individuals (not as symbols of family life and its cares), they appear as security and solace for old age and as guarantees of posterity, as well as a source of present pleasure, delight, and joy for their parents and other relatives (Salv. *Epist.* 4.13 (430s) and Ruricius, *Epist.* 1.3 (ca. 475/80) with *Epist.* 2.4 (485/95), *Epist.* 1.18 (485/90)).

The centrality of the family nucleus also appears in the vocabulary of nearness

and affection: the ideas and images of household relationships form the core of the rhetoric of belonging among Gaulish dignitaries. On a general level, bishops addressed members of their flock as children, and were correspondingly described and addressed as fathers. Individual fellow bishops, fellow priests, and fellow ascetics were addressed or referred to as one's brothers or sisters, as can be seen for example from the address formulae in the correspondence of Ruricius throughout. This rhetoric is crystallized in a letter of Salvian (*Epist.* 9.1. (430s?)) to his former student Salonius, now a bishop: "master and most blessed pupil, father, and son, pupil by instruction, son by affection, and father by rank and honor." Also, the importance granted to spiritual childhood and parenthood is clear throughout. According to Hilary of Arles (*Vita honorat.* 11.2, ca. 440), for example, when Honoratus and his brother Venantius planned to go abroad, "their entire homeland felt that it was losing fathers in these young men (*Amittere enim se omnis patria in iuvenibus illis patres sentiebat*)." Salvian (*Eccl.* 3.5, 430s) in turn claims that testators should ascertain that they leave offspring in the world by bequeathing property to the poor and those in need. Paulinus of Nola claims (*Epist.* 11.4, 397) that through the eyes of the "blessed offspring," sent by Sulpicius Severus to Nola as messengers, he is able to see Sulpicius, and through their lips to touch him. These *pueros* are not biological sons: they are claimed to love Sulpicius "as if" a father (*Epist.* 27.3 (ca. 401/2), *quasi patrem diligent*).

On the other hand, more distant relatives were addressed as parts of the family nucleus: nieces or nephews as sons or daughters, uncles or aunts as parents, in-laws as parents, brothers, or sisters. Ausonius is particularly known for his almost filial *pietas* towards his uncle Arborius (see next subchapter). Sulpicius Severus called his mother-in-law, Bassula, his parent, and even his correspondent Paulinus of Nola called Bassula Sulpicius' mother. Moreover, as Sulpicius had renounced his family and former friends for asceticism and Paulinus, there is a special relationship even between Paulinus and Bassula, who is referred to as both "our mother" and "our sister" in his letters (Sulp. Sev. *Epist.* 3.1; Paul. Nol. *Epist.* 5.6, *Epist.* 5.19, *Epist.* 11.3 and *Epist.* 31.1).

Thus, family rhetoric emphasizes the metaphors of the familial core, the father–mother–children triad. The relationship between a husband and a wife stresses marital harmony and partnership, but from the point of view of the inevitable male dominance – and proper Christian honoring of the father is in line with the traditional role models of Roman family life.

Childcare in Early Years: Parents and Other Relatives

More often than most ancient authors, our Gaulish writers include details on their or others' early childhood years, as well as on who took part in early education. Throughout antiquity, care for the youngest was usually associated with women: mothers, other female relatives, and/or wet-nurses (Krause 1991: 545 and Laes 2011a: 77–106). Also, the authors of Roman Gaul are eager to stress the “female nature” of early childhood education. Sidonius, for example, held the death of a mother of five young children as much more dramatic for the household than if the father had died (*Epist.* 2.8.1).

Ausonius was actually raised, from his early childhood years (*lactantem/ primis annis*) until he reached adulthood (*virumque*), by his mother's brother Aemilius Magnus Arborius (*Par.* 3.9, with Zittel 2009, 164–7). The uncle is described as being both a father and a mother to him, and therefore ought to have been mentioned in the *Parentalia* before Ausonius' father; only by compromise he is remembered after Ausonius' father and mother (*Par.* 3.3–8). Aemilius Arborius was a famous rhetorician in Toulouse who was later called to Constantinople as a tutor to Caesar Constantine, born in 316. He died there, while both of his parents were still alive, and his body was restored to his native city (*Prof.* 16.13–20). Aemilia Corinthia Maura, Ausonius' maternal grandmother, also took care of him as he was torn too soon from the cradle and his mother's breast: her training was kind but stern (*Par.* 5.9–10). We have a touching picture of her husband, grandfather Caecilius Argicius Arborius, who secretly kept a sealed horoscope of his grandchild, only to be discovered by the caring mother (*Par.* 4.19–22). Yet another maternal relative, his mother's sister Aemilia Hilaria, who lived as an avowed virgin, is mentioned by Ausonius as she was like a mother to him (*Par.* 6.1: *vice matris*).

This provokes intriguing questions which are alas never solved by the texts. It seems that Ausonius as a baby lived in the household of his maternal grandparents, who lived in close proximity to their son Aemilius Arborius (at that time a still unmarried promising scholar, who would later continue to support young Ausonius) and their daughter Aemilia Hilaria, who had chosen to remain celibate. Ausonius reveals that the age difference between him and his father was not that great: in fact, he knew of other cases where the age difference between brothers was greater than that between his father and him (*Epist.* 1.13–18). In the context of ancient society, this might lead us to suppose that father Julius Ausonius was rather under 20 – an age by no means exceptional for the Late Antique elites (Lelis, Percy, and Verstraete 2003) – when his son was born. A father aged between 25–35 would have been more usual from a demographic point of view. Most probably Ausonius' mother would have still been somewhat younger than her husband (Vuolanto 2015: 96–9; Saller 1994: 36–41, 54–67). If the reference on the little age difference with the father is not merely a *topos* (Zittel 2009: 168–9), maybe early fatherhood had influenced the decision that the grandparents should raise the

children. We know that Ausonius had two sisters and one brother: nothing is said about the childhood of his sister Iulia Dryada (*Par.* 12) or his younger brother, Avitianus (*Par.* 13). Another sister, Aemilia Melania, was a year older than Ausonius. When they were infants they shared the same cradle, but Aemilia sadly died in early childhood so that Ausonius had hardly known her at all (*Par.* 29). This leads us to suppose that young Melania lived together with her little brother under the protection of their maternal grandparents and possibly an uncle and an unmarried aunt. Agricola, grandson of Remigius, gives us a somewhat later example of a boy living in his grandparents' household (*Testamentum Remigii* (MGH SRM 3.336–47), before 533 CE).

Still others are mentioned by Ausonius as if they were mothers to him, thereby suggesting close proximity: his maternal aunt Aemilia Dryadia (*Par.* 25.10–12, possibly unmarried) and his paternal aunt Julia Cataphronia (*Par.* 26.6–8, unwed and vowed to virginity). When little Julia Idalia, Ausonius' cousin and daughter of his paternal aunt Julia Veneria (*Par.* 27), died, she is mentioned as “by birth nearly my sister” (*Par.* 28.4). However, we would suggest that the placing of these aunts and the cousin in the *Parentalia* marks a difference in proximity from the other aunt Aemilia Hilaria, who was mentioned already in the sixth epigram. Obviously, it makes no sense to speculate on the motives of Ausonius' parents for placing at least two of their young children with their grandparents, and it is even more pointless to postulate a lack of affection between Ausonius and his parents which would then be reflected in the *Parentalia*. True, the poet explicitly mentions that he should hesitate to place his father first (*Par.* 1.2), but he nevertheless speaks of him and his medical skills with high esteem. Moreover, the touching *Epicedion in patrem* is a poem of 79 lines in which Ausonius praises his father – who died aged 90, still in good physical health (*Epiced.* 76) – as a role model, having led a life all would like to achieve for themselves. Throughout Ausonius' works the relationship between father and son appears as close and affectionate (Zittel 2009, 167–71). While a modern audience might be struck by “the coolest and most unimpassioned terms” (Evelyn-White 1921, viii–ix) by which Ausonius speaks of his mother, she is nevertheless honored as a virtuous Roman *matrona*, chaste with wool-spinning hands, true to her husband (for 45 years), and at pains to bring up her children, sedate and friendly, sober yet bright (*Par.* 2.4–6, with Aus. *Epiced.* 52–3). Cultural anthropology has at least taught us to be extremely cautious in making statements (or worse, judgments) about feelings or emotions of people from other cultures, be it in the present or the past (Golden 2011).

Unfortunately, Ausonius reveals nothing more on the household context of his own early childhood. He must have been surrounded by a wet-nurse and other servants in his grandparents' house, yet these people are never mentioned. Most of the information we get in his *Commemoratio professorum Burdigalensium* is related to schooling and education. It is not clear whether

his elementary teachers Macrinus and Sucuro, the son of a freedman, actually taught him at home and were thus somehow part of the household (*Prof.* 10.11–17). A remark on Ausonius' difficulty in or reluctance to embark on Greek studies in childhood years (*puerilis aevi*) at least suggests that he was raised in Latin (*Prof.* 8.12–16). This is an interesting detail, since we know that his father had difficulties with Latin, but managed to express himself very elegantly in Greek (*Epiced.* 24–5): an indication that father and son were not in close proximity during the first childhood years when language is acquired.

However, Ausonius reveals some telling details of the household structure while he was a father and a grandfather himself. He was married to Attusia Lucana Sabina (*Par.* 9), who died at 27, leaving him as a 33-year-old father with a son and a daughter. He would never marry again, and when he wrote the *Parentalia*, 36 years after her death, he was still mourning her (*Par.* 9.7–10). Previously, the young couple had lost an infant son, also Ausonius, who was buried “on his great-grandfather’s bosom” (*Par.* 10.5). Might this have been Caecilius Argicius Arborius, who took care of father Ausonius himself when he was a young child? Since the two other children, a son named Hesperius and a daughter, survived their father, they are not commemorated in the *Parentalia*: a young grandson, Pastor, is, since he accidentally died “stricken down by the weight of a cast tile, thrown from the roof by a workman’s hand” (*Par.* 11.9–10; trans. E. G. Evelyn-White). Ausonius’ bitter remark that it was as if the tile had reached his own head points to a close relationship with the deceased boy, though we cannot know for sure (*Par.* 11.14). In second century, Fronto similarly had mourned his three-year-old grandson (*De nepote amisso*, with Eyben and Laes 2005). Ausonius also wrote a *Genethliacon* or birthday poem on the occasion of the eighteenth birthday of another grandson, Ausonius – here the grandfather actually mentions that he had refrained from giving educational advice while his grandson was still a boy and entrusted to the care of the schoolmaster (*Genethl.* 1–2): only now, when he had reached manhood, was it time for the rhetorical advice of the grandfather (*Genethl.* 19–20). The *Protrepticus ad nepotem* is another advisory poem directed towards the same grandson (for the poem and the preceding letter modeled on Quintilian. *Inst. Or.* 10.1.17–19, see McGill 2007 and Amherdt 2010). Mainly concerned with schooling and education, the poem advises the boy not be frightened by the terrifying, austere face of a schoolmaster, as children prefer the wrinkled face of the wet-nurse to that of their mother, or, as grandchildren, “late, but new objects of care,” prefer their trembling grandpas and grandmas to their fathers (*Protr.* 17–19). It is unclear how far Ausonius speaks from his own experience, but the remark is telling for the supposed experience of early childhood environment. After all, he invoked the experiences of the boy’s parents with regard to strokes of the cane and fear of punishment (*Protr.* 33–4).

A rare mention of caretakers outside the family nucleus appears with Sidonius

Apollinaris, who seems to have traveled with his young daughter, Roscia, while his wife, Papianilla, stayed at home. Now he relates in a letter how Roscia “is being nurtured in the most indulgent lap of her grandmother and aunts, which rarely happens when grandchildren are raised, with a strictness that does not harm her tender years but which strengthens her intellect” (*Epist.* 5.16.5, c.460, with Mathisen 2003: 71). That grandmothers take care of their young relatives is by no means surprising; what is worth noting, however, is the inclusion of the aunts here. Again, we lack precise information on the family arrangements, but this also adds to the impression that aunts often played an important role in the lives of their younger kin. Also here we have a contemporary parallel in epigraphy, with a specific mention of the “endless grief of her aunt and mother” on the death of five-year-old Proba (*CIL* 13.1655, 498, near Lyon).

The earliest childhood of Paulinus of Pella was characterized by extensive traveling. As noted, he was born in 376 in Pella, where his father, Hesperius, was prefect to Illyricum. Not yet nine months old, he left for Carthage because of his father’s promotion to proconsul of Africa. The hazardous undertaking of the journey is described, with little Paulinus held in the trembling arms of a wet-nurse or wet-nurses (*trepidis nutricum creditus ulnis*; the Latin genitive plural *nutricum* leaves some doubt as poets are often in the habit of mixing singular and plural (*Euch.* 21–33)). Only 18 months later the family left for Rome. Of course, Paulinus did not remember anything of the splendor of the *Urbs Aeterna*, but he later on relied on what he was told about it (*Euch.* 34–41). At age three, in 379, he finally returned with his family to his hometown Bordeaux, where he first met his glorious grandfather Ausonius, who was at that moment serving as a consul (*Euch.* 42–9).

At Bordeaux, Paulinus’ early childhood years (age three to five) were characterized by a soft and moderate education in which liberty, play, and joy were important. This pedagogical approach, for which he remained forever grateful to his parents, included both intellectual and moral training: he already started to learn the alphabet, and was made acquainted with “the ten special marks of ignorance” (*decem signa ... amathiae*: the exact meaning of *amathia* is unsure, and interpretations range from “grammatical errors” to “moral precepts,” or “collections of proverbs”) (*Euch.* 66, with Marcone 1995: 86). In old age Paulinus nostalgically looked back to this education which by then seemed to be lost forever (*Euch.* 50–71). Barely older than five, little Paulinus was introduced to Greek texts by Socrates (or Isocrates; uncertain reading in the manuscripts) and Homer, both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Unfortunately, he only mentions he was made to learn them; no details of the educators are given (*cogor*; *Euch.* 72–4). Also he was introduced to Latin by being forced to read Virgil (*iubeor*; *Euch.* 75–6). Paulinus claims that as a child he was not at all well acquainted with the Latin tongue, but was more used to converse in Greek with the servants by whom he was surrounded. He

then continues to criticize his bilingual education, useful indeed to brilliant minds, but less fit to less receptive minds, as was his: even in old age, writing his autobiography, he regrets not being better versed in Latin (*Euch.* 76–86, with Marcone 1995: 88–9 and Green 1990 for the “remarkable language situation” of Ausonius’ family in Bordeaux).

The comment or rather the lament on bilingual education is a unique instance in ancient literature (albeit it may deliberately echo Augustine’s claims of having had problems in learning Greek, in *Conf.* 1.12.19–14.23). Throughout the history of child care, upper-class people have often favored women of different ethnic groups: while Greeks used to hire nurses from Thrace, the Roman elite chose Greek nurses. But only for more recent periods do we know and then get an insight into the challenges and tensions of such bicultural child care. Lynet Uttal’s (2010) especially revealing article sheds light, *mutatis mutandis*, of experiences in cases like Paulinus’, as she analyses the tension between English and Spanish, as well as the “liminal state of limbo between two societies” of Latino immigrant family child carers in the present-day United States (see also Pache Huber and Dasen 2010: 678).

Imbued with an obsession towards the faults and sins of his *jeunesse dorée*, Paulinus then moves on to his teenage years, till his marriage at age 20 (*Euch.* 141–75), offering interesting clues as to the subject of extended family (see below subchapter ‘Extended and Multiple Family’). Though he had two sons and one daughter, there is not even any mention of their early childhood years in the *Eucharisticon*.

With Caesarius’ sermons we move on to the sixth century. They mainly mention early childhood in rather specific religious contexts: the moral obligation to raise all children born and to avoid infanticide, abortion, or any sort of contraception (*Serm.* 1.12; 19.5; 44.2; 51.4; 52.4; 200.4), and the need for moral and religious education of one’s natural children and godchildren received by baptism (*Serm.* 13.2; 50.3; 130.5; 200.6; 204.3). The custom of wet-nursing is regarded as a valuable and equivalent alternative: a mother needs to feed every child she gives birth to, or give it to somebody else to feed (*Serm.* 19.5 with *Serm.* 44.2), and wet-nurses (*nutrices*) served as symbols of homeliness, like when *nutrix* and mother were used as the image of welcoming Caesarius to the community of Lérins (*Serm.* 236.1–2, with *Serm.* 87.5: the *nutrix* handing out simple explanations to those not yet acquainted with faith). Sometimes *nutrices* seem to have been equated with all sorts of suspect healers to whom mothers resorted when their children were ill (*Serm.* 52.6). However, Caesarius’ approval of the nursing habit is in contrast to the severe rejection by ideological statements of some earlier ecclesiastical writers such as John Chrysostom or Ambrosius (Dasen 2010: 702; Joh. Chrys. *Homilia* I in *Psalmum* L (PG 55.572); Ambros. *Hexaemeron* 5.18). It seems that there was a difference between a moralistic genre and a more pastoral or even everyday writing. The nurses feature as commonplace and even symbols

of cosiness not only in the texts of secular writers such as Paulinus of Pella and Ausonius above, but also in Augustine. But at least their presence is taken for granted (August. *Conf.* 1.6–7; 1.9.14–15; 1.14.23; 9.8.17, with e.g., August. *Epist.* 98.4 and 194.7.32; Jerome, *Epist.* 3.5 and 107.4).

In a heartbreaking account of the sufferings the people of Arles endured when the city was besieged by the Franks and the Burgundians in 508, we read about nurses out of whose arms infants were torn and subsequently thrown into the streets while still breathing (*Serm.* 70.2). We are told that mothers or nurses daubed their breasts with something bitter in order to get their sucklings out of the habit of breastfeeding (*Serm.* 141.5 with Laes 2010: 115). Unfortunately, Caesarius never reveals whether the job of wet-nursing was undertaken by women of servile status: a recent study on slavery in Late Antiquity mentions a still considerable number of servile wet-nurses in the period 275–425 (Harper 2011). Since slaves did not at all disappear in the early sixth century, there is a serious chance that at least some of the *nutrices* mentioned by Caesarius were slaves.

Education and Educators in Later Childhood Years

Some information on family caring can also be extracted from Sulpicius Severus' stories on the miracles of St Martin. Many of these scenes include a parent and a child. Somewhat against what might be expected, the father's role in caring for his children is rather prominent: it was the father who brought his mute 12-year-old daughter to be healed by Martin (*Dial.* 3.2); similarly, a paralyzed girl is presented by her old father (*Vita Mart.* 16.2–8). A former prefect, Arborius, dedicated his young daughter (*puella*) to virginity right after Martin had made her recover from quartan fever (*Vita Mart.* 19.1–2). On the other hand, there is but one case in which the mother was active: Martin roused a boy from death because of her supplications (*Dial.* 2.4). However, a sermon by Caesarius of Arles suggests that it was mainly mothers who administered care when their children were struck with illness (Caes. *Serm.* 184.4). Only in the case of the paralyzed girl are there other relatives or household members mentioned; even here her relatives (*propinqui*) are pictured as passive bystanders. Needless to say, the emphasis on parental care is somewhat skewed by the literary conventions of miracle stories: the fact that the parental role is emphasized does not exclude the possibility that these children lived in what we would call extended households (Krause 1991: 540–1; Laes 2011b: 51–2).

Fathers were in charge of the education of their sons. This duty was not always a burden, as is shown in a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris. Sidonius tells how he and his son were together reading the *Hecyra* of Terence:

Seated at his side as he studied, I forgot the cleric in the father; to increase his ardor and incite my docile scholar to a more perfect appreciation of the comic rhythms, I had in my own hands a play with a similar plot, the *Epitrepontes* of Menander. We were reading, and jesting, and applauding the fine passages – the play charmed him, and he me, we were both equally absorbed, when all of a sudden a household slave appears.

(Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 4.12.1–2, trans. R. W. Mathisen)

Not only was the literate education in the fathers' charge, but also their sons' initiation into hunting and military skills (Paul. Pell. *Euch.* 127–34; Avitius, *Epist.* 95 (490/518)). As Ruricius' letters to his adolescent errant son show, quite naturally the parental educative duty included also moral instruction and discipline (*Epist.* 2.24 and 25 (495/500), with Faustus, *Epist.* "Licet per" (SG 1, Mathisen 1999: 92–6)).

Even if fathers were responsible for the literary education of their sons, they naturally took advantage of professional educators, and of their friends (e.g., Avitius, *Epist.* 95; Ruricius, *Epist.* 1.3). In some cases there was little difference between these groups; thus, for example, in the monastic community of Lérins, the education of the sons of Eucherius, Veranus, and Salonius, was taken care of by a wide circle of learned fellow ascetics, among whom were Salvian and Hilary of Arles, whose ties continued also later with Eucherius' family (Eucherius, *Instr. Salon.* (esp. CSEL 31.65–6) and Salv. *Epist.* 9.1 (430s?) with Vessey 2001: 290–1). In this case the education of the sons was considerably different from the pagan schooling that had been instilled in children for centuries. There are no instances of special education and schooling of older girls, though early marriage as mentioned in the correspondence of Sidonius Apollinaris might have had this function (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 7.2.3).

Parental intervention also appears in other stories. According to Sulpicius Severus, St Martin met fierce opposition on the part of his parents because of he aspired to an ascetic life in the desert. Especially his father (*tribunus militum*) opposed his "holy actions." The father had his son arrested, put in chains, and sent to the army at the age of 15 (*Vita Mart.* 2.2–5 with Van Dam 1985: 120–2). It seems that Sulpicius Severus' own father had opposed his son's plans to leave home and devote himself to the religious life after the death of his young wife (Paul. Nol. *Epist.* 5.5). Also, Paulinus of Pella, referring to his own marriage as forged by his parents, highlighted his Christian virtue and presented himself as a would-be ascetic (*Euch.* 176–81). These depictions echo, however, the widespread ideology of parental opposition among the ascetically inclined writers of Late Antiquity (Vuolanto 2009). More trustworthy are, in fact, the stories showing parental influence in the other direction. Thus, sons of Eucherius and Galla joined them in the ascetic community of Lérins, and were eventually elected bishops. Likewise, Salvian and his wife Palladia took their little daughter, Auspiciola, with them

when they started their life in the ascetic community of Lérins in the 420s (Salv. *Epist.* 4; Paul. Nol. *Epist.* 51). However, both kinds of story highlight the decisive influence of parents, and strong commitment of fathers, in directing the future of their children.

Family and Household: The Role of Servants

Though the middle of the fifth century and especially the sixth century in the West are now considered as periods of marked economic change and decline, marked by a deep recession in market demand, there were nevertheless slaves in the sixth century, as there had been some hundred years before. Even though the presence of slaves and servants is often mentioned and seemingly a self-evident fact of life among the elites (Faustus, *Epist.* “Licet per” to Ruricius (*SG* 1, Mathisen 1999: 92–6); Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 4.12.1–2; Sulp. Sev. *Epist.* 2), their actual roles in familial relations are a subject less often mentioned by our authors. A lonely vignette on the influence of slaves in elite households is supplied by Paulinus, who learned Greek in his childhood while playing and conversing with the servants (*Euch.* 76–80).

The almost casual cruelty wielded against slaves appears in two epigrams by Ausonius, in which he jocularly mentions the tattooing of his runaway scribe slave, who unfortunately wrote as slowly as his legs moved. In the second epigram, master Ausonius changed the punishment: now the slave’s forehead bore the traces of what was actually the fault of his legs (*Epigr.* 16–17). “Up with you, you waster! What a thrashing you deserve!” (*lacerande virgis*) are the remarkable words when he addresses his lazy slave Parmenon, who does not come quickly out of his downy bed (*Ephem.* 1.17). When Ausonius, again jocularly (!), compares the charms of a mistress (*amica*) with those of a legal wife (*uxor*), he comments that the former is “beautiful, impudent and lascivious, one who bears beatings and hits herself, and when she is beaten, she takes refuge in kissing,” while the latter is “chaste, modest, and too prudent in her actions” (*Epigr.* 79). One wonders whether the degrading treatment in Roman eyes was not exclusively reserved for slaves or at least girls of a lower social class. On the other hand, Sulpicius Severus’ writings on St Martin include an array of stories in which his protagonist heals household servants and slaves. In most cases the master is depicted as having made supplications for his household members (*Vita Mart.* 17.1–4; *Dial.* 2.2; *Dial.* 3.14). However, in one case it is a question of a household slave who had hanged himself – and in this case the master was not present (*Vita Mart.* 8.1).

Ausonius’ verses for his “little Suebian girl Bissula” (*Biss.* 1.2) have been mentioned as casting “a faint light on an obscure corner of Late Antique life ... where the main lines of political ideology, cultural classicism, and social stratification merged” (Harper 2011: 303). The girl was booty of war, and the

cruel detail that she had not known either a *nutrix* or a mother makes it quite clear that she was captured at a very young age (*Biss.* 3.1–5). Brought into the home of her new master Ausonius (*alumnus*; *Biss.* 6.1) – by then a widower claiming to lament eternally the early loss of his wife – she was almost immediately set free by him (*Biss.* 3.3, 3.8), and became like the ruler of the house of her patron (3.6), who was apparently charmed by her northern European looks and the way she pronounced her Latin (3.9–12). In the fourth poem Bissula is called “my precious, my charmer, my toy, my love, my lust! ... Bissula, a rough name for a soft girl, a little rude to those who don’t know you, but delicious in your master’s ears” (*Biss.* 4). Taking into account that the name Bissula might have an obscene connotation, we are left with a strange feeling about the perhaps not too subtle tastes of an ageing courtier who sent these verses to a friend. Even if some scholars have pointed to the possibility of the Bissula poems being a pure literary game, the fact remains that it was not considered odd according to the taste of the time (Ausonius was by then certainly a Christian) to express such feelings for a former slave girl (see Knight 2006 stressing the metapoetic issues; Heinen 1995; Dräger 2001, and Harper 2011, 303–4 pointing to the social historical use of the text).

The male attitude that sex with female slaves was inconsequential, and at least much easier than illegal and problematic sex with a free woman, seems to have been even more resistant to clerical disapproval. When Paulinus of Pella looked back to his youthful failures, he is consoled by the fact that he had always avoided willing offers by the freeborn and had been content with the attractions of slaves in his house. Acting thus, he had at least avoided criminal offenses and damage to his reputation. Little did it matter that one of his slaves had a child by him: he never even saw the illegitimate offspring who – as we might suppose – died almost immediately (*Euch.* 165–72). Caesarius over and over emphasizes the necessity for men to keep their eyes and hands off slave girls, be it their own or those of their neighbors (*Serm.* 41.3, 42.2). It seems as if his severe exhortations did not have the effect he wished: people would describe this vice as a mere youthful peccadillo (*Serm.* 41.4, 43.1); men would boast about their conquests among the slave girls (*Serm.* 42.3); some even publicly had a concubine (*Serm.* 43.4). The bishop has to admit that, despite the fact that men needed to be virgins when entering marriage, there were so many who were not that it was impossible to excommunicate them all (*Serm.* 42.5, 43.5). One wonders how many men would have accepted Caesarius’ moral logic, which ran as follows: when a woman was caught with her slave, she was punished; for a man who was caught with several (!) female slaves, no punishment was reserved. As men and women were equal in the sight of God, the same moral rules had to apply to both: what was forbidden to the wives needed to be forbidden to the husbands too (*Serm.* 42.3, with Mathisen 2008 and Harper 2013).

Extended and Multiple Family

On a more general level, members of the extended family formed the basis for a social network of patronage and friendship. This shows for example in the correspondence of Ruricius at the end of the fifth century in general, and in his letter to Euphrasius, a fellow bishop and “a relative” in particular (*Epist.* 2.22; Mathisen 1999: 27–8). The exact nature of the kin relation in question is not often singled out, but the very existence of such family ties was celebrated and emphasized, as can be seen in Sidonius’ letters to his uncles or his wife’s brother (*Epist.* 4.12; *Epist.* 2.12), or cases showing Salvian intervening on behalf of his relative (*Epist.* 1.5; 1.8; 1.10; see also Avitus, *Epist.* 52; Sulp. Sev. *Dial.* 2.2). As Ralph Mathisen (1981: 96, 105–8; 1984; 2001: 102–10) has shown, extended family ties – propagated in and by different kinds of literary work – formed a basis for local power play. Thus, for example, belonging to the right family was of central importance in episcopal elections.

Historians who study household structures and complexities in Europe over the centuries have not overly focused on the presence of servants or serfs. They have been more interested in the co-residential characteristics of household composition over time, distinguishing between simple families (consisting of a married couple with or without children, or a single parent with children – all these without other kinsmen), extended families (one single-family unit plus one or more additional residents related to members of that unit), and multiple families (two or more kin-related single-family units). Also, there is a classic distinction between the stem family system where a single married child remains in the parental household, and the joint family system where more than one single married child remains (see e.g., Hammel and Laslett 1974 and Kertzer 1989. Note the absence of antiquity in these).

In this matter we have already mentioned the regrettable lack of hard demographical evidence for antiquity. Our Gaulish authors are not of great assistance here. There are of course some exceptions, such as Ausonius’ information on where he passed his early childhood years (see above, p. 266–7). We have already referred to Ausonius’ persistent mentioning of relatives who were a part of his single-family unit (e.g., nieces or nephews as sons or daughters, uncles or aunts as parents, in-laws as brothers or sisters). How far this related to close (affective) proximity, let alone co-residence, is unclear. At least in one instance, it was apparently related to financial support or heritage (*Par.* 26.5–6 with a paternal aunt). That it is not merely a rhetorical *topos* is clear from *Parentalia* 21, where Ausonius explicitly states that he had only had slight acquaintance with his sister-in-law and none at all with her husband, who both were buried far from him: still he found it important to render a last homage to their names. We also know that Ausonius’ sister went back to her parental home after the death of her husband (*Aus. Par.* 3.12.9 with Krause 1991: 553). Also, Caesarius’ grades of charity by no means need to point to co-residence (see above, p. 263–4). When he mentions the

desirability of inviting parents and neighbors to share Christmas festivity at home, we see a rare glimpse of a possible single-family unit, where parents and married children do not cohabit (*Serm.* 188.5).

Social historians might, however, find comfort in Paulinus of Pella, who actually reveals some telling information on cohabitation and household complexity. Aged 20 he married a girl of a noble but impoverished family. When the girl's father had died, she had succeeded him at a young age (*Euch.* 185–6); her patron or tutor, apparently already of advanced age, turned out to be incapable of managing the estate in a proper way (*dudum desidia domini neglecta senili*; *Euch.* 184). The use of the word *neptis* (granddaughter) in verse 185 suggests that Paulinus' future wife after the death of her father cohabited with her grandfather on an estate which, due to malgestion, was about to fall into disrepair, until the young husband, Paulinus, came to settle things the hard way (*invitos domini adstringendo rigore*; *Euch.* 192). Also, we are informed that Paulinus of Pella as a married man in Bordeaux lived for the most part of the year together with his parents (*Euch.* 221–5): a clear example of what is classified as a multiple family in the stem family system.

When his father died, Paulinus by testament was appointed as a guardian to his mother; a brother tried to contest the father's will since the tutelage apparently brought advantage to Paulinus (*Euch.* 246–53). His mother continued to live with Paulinus and his household (*Euch.* 457–60): after the sack of Bordeaux in 414, it is said that both he and his mother were deprived of most of their possessions (*Euch.* 317–18; Krause 1991: 555 for other cases of co-residence with the mother). By then, one daughter had already left the parental house to live with her husband (*Euch.* 326–7). Since Paulinus married in 396, this daughter was at most 18 years of age in 414. It is not said when she had married but age of marriage at 14/16 seems very likely (Krause 1991: 542–3).

In Bazas, too, life was not easy for Paulinus and his household. He barely escaped death in an uprising by the notorious *bagaudi* (*Euch.* 328–42). When he then turned to the Alan king as a negotiator, he was accompanied by “a large cohort of those who were dear to me” (*agmine carorum magno comitante meorum*; *Euch.* 349). Might we imagine an almost 40-year-old aristocrat followed by his younger sons, other relatives, and servants, attending a German king? At least negotiations were successful (*Euch.* 378–405). In the following passages, Paulinus offers a rare and this time unambiguous insight into cohabitation during the Bazas years. In old age he thanks God for having had a happy household (*plena domus caris affectibus*; *Euch.* 457), consisting of his children (two sons), his mother, his mother-in-law, his wife, and a considerable number of slaves and servants pertaining to his wife and mother-in-law (*fili, mater, socrus, uxor/cum grege non minimo famularum quippe suarum*; *Euch.* 459–60): having such a prosperous household belonged both to the tradition of the ancestors and the precepts of

the church (*Euch.* 465–7). Paulinus’ family is a clear instance of a three-generation household, for which other examples in the same period are attested. In all likelihood such households were even more frequent in the countryside than in the cities (Krause 1991: 558–60).

Paulinus’ project of going east in order to render lucrative various estates of his mother in Greece and Epirus was canceled by his affection for his relatives (*Euch.* 406–30); looking back in old age, he blames himself for having been too materialistic and he thanks God for the many things he did receive from Him (*Euch.* 431–50). In the cancelation of the travel project, his wife played an important role. She refused to go with him, since she was stubborn and not prepared to give way for the sake of the common well-being of the family, and feared traveling by sea. Paulinus felt that he could not take her with him against her will, and nor could he separate her from her two young sons (*Euch.* 485–8).

Eventually, Paulinus’ extended household thinned out. First his mother-in-law and his mother died (*Euch.* 493), followed by his wife. It seems as if he had somehow forgiven her refusal to go to the east: during her life, her fears had made her an obstacle to him, and by her death, she caused him pain. In addition, she deprived him of support in his old age, since the two sons had left the house (*Euch.* 493–8). Paulinus never married again, though he never relates this to ascetic vocation or religious motives. We are not informed when the two boys left (or whether the mother was still alive at that moment, though she probably was), but a date of 420, before Paulinus left for Marseille, seems plausible. In any case, they did not leave at the same moment (*nec tempore eodem; Euch.* 499). The fact that neither of the two chose to remain in the paternal home – which could eventually have led to the foundation of an extended or even a multiple family when Paulinus and his wife would have been alive – is explicitly mentioned as contrary to the will of the father (*invito me; Euch.* 503). What we actually have is the image of two ambitious teenagers (*libertatis amore; Euch.* 500) who in troubled times left for the region of Bordeaux, hoping to make their career in a part of the empire which was by then largely under Gothic influence (*Euch.* 500–2). Paulinus finds consolation in the thought that both would recompense their father when they had made a fortune (*Euch.* 503–7).

However, things turned out differently. The first son died as a priest at a young age, and in unknown circumstances lost all the property his father had given to him (*Euch.* 508–11), while the other ended his political career at the court of the Visigothic king Alaric I (418–51), murdered and deprived of all his paternal goods (*Euch.* 512–15). So the decision to leave the house was not at all followed by a paternal boycott: both sons left with a donation from their father. We hear little about the persons with whom Paulinus shared his “impoverished” life as an unmarried widower (*caelebs; Euch.* 542) in Marseille and over the age of 80 in Bordeaux. By his strenuous labor, he had

again acquired a considerable number of slaves in Marseille, which allowed him a somewhat comfortable existence (*Euch.* 537–8), but by the time of his return to Bordeaux, he was again faced with financial problems and bad health (*Euch.* 541–3). He eventually found comfort in being financially supported by others, though it is not said whether they were friends or relatives (*Euch.* 560–2).

Conclusions

Let us for a moment transfer the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus to Roman Gaul. They fall asleep around the year 300, only to awake some 250 years later. They would certainly face an utterly different world. The presence of churches and cemeteries inside the city walls combined with the disappearance of fora, bathhouses, and monuments related to ancient spectacles caused towns to take on an appearance which would have made them unrecognizable to those who had lived some generations before. The education system was profoundly transformed and mainly reduced to monastic schooling. The sexual mores were by now imbued with the principles of the Christian faith: male-to-male relationships disappeared into the margins of society (Harper 2013). The clergy, part of whom claimed asceticism and praised celibacy, were omnipresent and had taken the position of the local aristocracy. Germanic tribes had intermingled with the local population. Though they partly took over Roman law and custom, the new rulers were not comparable to the Roman administrators who had governed Gaul for centuries.

It is striking that our Gaulish authors over five generations hardly mention these profound changes, but careful comparison can reveal that things had changed. In the late fourth century Ausonius humorously (and not subtly, to modern taste) pointed to the sexual availability of willing slave mistresses. To Salvian, the sexual use of slaves in rich households was endemic: “in Aquitania, what rich or noble quarter of the city was not like a brothel?” (*Gub.* 7.3–4, cited by Harper 2011, 301). But less than a century later the fierce bishop Caesarius constantly reminded his male married parishioners about restraining their lust. In the year 533–4 in Spain, the Visigothic king Athalaric promulgated a law against adultery by married men, thereby even disallowing sexual relationships between masters and their slaves (*Cass. Var.* 9.18; *LV* 3.4.17. See Harper 2011: 462). It is impossible to tell how far the new sexual mores affected life in extended households with slaves, but it is hard to imagine that they had no effect whatsoever.

In family discourse, not much changed. Even if Christianity brought with it appreciation of celibacy, family life – and especially the nuclear family – remained both the center of strong expectations and a mine for rhetorical

concepts and *topoi* to be used in argumentation of different kinds of pursuable and proper behavior and emotions. *Pietas* continued to be a matter of both obligation and emotional investment (See above, subchapter ‘The Late Roman Family Ideal in Gaul’, with Zittel 2009). Not surprisingly, among the old Roman elites of Late Antique Gaul, no influence of Germanic tribe kinship can be found.

The reason for this silence on change is certainly not the authors’ lack of interest in matters related to family and social life. Quite the contrary: we are inclined to claim that family affairs had become much more central for the social interaction of our period than during the first centuries of the Roman Empire. Our authors offer a mine of information on families and family life – information which is hardly ever transferred so fully by earlier ancient sources (with some exceptions, such as Cicero’s correspondence). Ausonius’ family is the best documented of antiquity; Paulinus of Pella has revealing details on actual cohabitation and extended households. This chapter has therefore pointed out the importance of at least three groups of actors: grandparents, aunts and uncles, and slaves. The ubiquity of slaves formed the backdrop for any elite household scene, both during the Principate and in Late Antiquity. Grandparents, in turn, were an influential resource for children, especially when they were in effect in charge of the upbringing of their grandchildren, either as a co-resident of their children or by taking their grandchildren into their houses. The same goes for uncles and aunts, who in Ausonius’ *Parentalia* appear as active agents in upbringing and familial networks.

Taking into account high mortality and relatively low life expectancy, it is not possible to claim that these family formations occurred more frequently in late Roman Gaul than earlier. But at least the sources mention the family situation and give us a glimpse of daily reality. Overall, with the exception of the Ausonius case, we have very little information on the actual co-residency of extended family members in cases in which the family nucleus consisted of a couple and their children. This may be related to an ideological preference for the nuclear family unit. However, as the example of Paulinus of Pella shows, there was a certain expectation among the elites that the newlywed couple would co-reside with the husband’s parents, forming a multiple household. And the fact that Paulinus’ mother-in-law also came to live in this household might be related to the fact that the conjugal bond with her husband had been broken by death.

As our sources offer evidence of a broad environment of education and childhood, comparisons are possible with earlier periods of antiquity. But how does our study fit into the broad framework of comparative social history on households and household formations throughout the history of Western Europe? Fragmentary and haphazard as the source material might seem, it is the best we have and the best we will ever have. We have no access to any statistical data whatsoever. The archaeology of houses and households in late

Roman Gaul is just in its earliest phase. On the basis of house size, archaeologists can guess the number of inhabitants. Chemical examination of the soil can reveal whether a specific room was inhabited by animals or human beings (see Gerritsen 2004). Much of this research still needs to be done, but it will never inform us on matters such as the presence of slaves, the functioning of familial networks, or the actual composition of a household. For these subjects, the famous adage that “the spade cannot lie” since it cannot tell us anything is a truism which needs to be kept in mind.

Because of the lack of quantitative data, we might be tempted to come to qualitative conclusions (see also Krause 1991: 562). Both the correspondence and the other literate outputs of our Gaulish writers were devices for maintaining and developing friendship and extended family networks – which often seem to have overlapped with each other. The role of these relations in the elite social life of Late Antique Gaul was central, even more so in times of change and insecurity. By relying on their familial networks and emphasizing their importance, these aristocrats showed off their *romanitas*. This seems to have been very much a feature of social reality and not due to the nature of the sources, as we have deliberately included in this brief study materials of different sorts.

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Part V

Outlook in Later Period of the Mediterranean

Missing Women in the Italian Middle Ages? Data and Interpretation

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The Missing Females of Italy: Sex Ratio in Medieval Sources

In his *Cronica* of Florence, Giovanni Villani describes how, in the year 1338, the priest baptized young children in the Church of San Giovanni: “he would, each year, receive anywhere between 5,500 to 6,000, with an excess of the male sex in the range of three hundred to five hundred a year” (Villani, *Chronica*, III. i.i.97). Given this ratio, the number of male baptisms in this church outweighed that of females in a proportion ranging from 110.5:100 to 120:100 (Biller 2000). This is significant in that the standard sex ratio at birth is 105 males for every 100 females (Frugoni 1965; Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1985; Biller 2000). Similarly, the cadastres of different Tuscan cities (e.g., Florence, Pisa, and Lucca) from the first half of the fifteenth century show a sex ratio that is clearly unfavorable to females in different phases of the life cycle (Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1985; Dalla Zuanna *et al.* 2012).

Four hundred years earlier, the polyptych of the monastery of Farfa in Lazio portrays a similar picture (Ring 1979; Feller 1994). Within the polyptych, the composition of 244 familial units residing in different villages controlled by the monastery towards the end of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century and situated in Abruzzi was recorded. A close examination of this data reveals a disproportionate sex ratio of individuals classified as “sons,” with 136 males for every 100 females.

But there is more: a disproportionate sex ratio in favor of males has also been observed in the archaeological record. In fact, a recent study focusing on the Italian Early and Late Middle Ages using archaeological and anthropological data shows that the ratio between adult male and female individuals was clearly disproportionate in favor of the former (Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2007).¹ More specifically, among the 2,241 individuals aged 20+ buried in 30 necropolises dating between the sixth and fifteenth centuries, the number of men is greater than that of women, with an average sex ratio of 169 males for every 100 females (Barbiera 2012a).

Intriguingly, such unbalanced sex-ratio values are not observed in Italian cemeteries during Roman times or Late Antiquity. Indeed, changes in sex-ratio values seem to reflect a shifting pattern over the centuries (Figure 15.1). More specifically, the ratio of adult males to females was relatively balanced during Roman times, while we find more males than females buried in medieval cemeteries. Smaller necropolises, where the sample of adults falls below 40 in number, have been excluded from this study. Among those not included it should, however, be noted that the discrepancy between the number of men and women is, in many cases, equally apparent.²

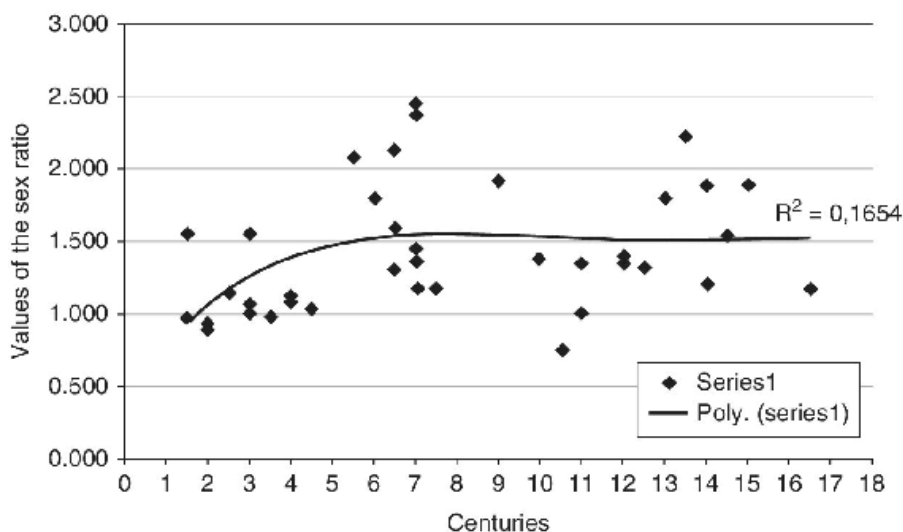


Figure 15.1 Trend in adult sex ratio using a sample of 39 Italian cemeteries dating from the first to the sixteenth century CE. We excluded from this graph cemeteries with a $SR_{20+} < 0.5$ (which in a stationary population corresponds to an $SR_{0-19} = 2.00$) and $SR_{20+} > 2.5$ (which corresponds to an $SR_{0-19} = 0.66$).

One can, in good faith, argue that such data reflect a relatively widespread pattern in early medieval and medieval Italian necropolises. Even if the overall number of necropolises considered here is relatively low, the broad interval of time and extensive territory over which they are positioned mean they make up large part of the Italian anthropological material currently available. More data may well become available in the future, following the analysis and publication of new excavation material.

Of interest here is that a disproportionate sex ratio appears to be equally widespread across all the Italian regions, as well as in the necropolises linked to diverse sites in the vicinity of settlements, such as villages or cities, churches or castles.

As such, data from medieval necropolises seem even more unbalanced than those gathered from the Florentine, Pisa, or Lucca cadastres, or the polyptych from Farfa. There is another substantial difference between data from written

sources and that from the archaeological record: the former clearly reflect a phenomenon of female underrepresentation most evident among infants. For example, in the polyptych from Farfa, the sex ratio becomes balanced only beginning at adult ages (103 to 100). In the Florentine cadastre of 1427, female children are instead underrepresented until the age of 13 and then among women between the ages of 22 and 50. In the necropolises, the disproportionate sex ratio certainly concerns the adult sample, while the ratio of male to female children is unknown, in that it is not possible to determine the sex of individuals who died before 15/18 years of age. In infancy, in fact, the differences between males and females are not visible in analyses typically conducted on skeletal remains.

How might these data be interpreted?

In the case of the polyptych from Farfa, Ring concludes that an underreporting of female children, above all firstborns, can explain the infant sex-ratio values. In fact, in cases in which only one child was recorded (36 families), it was almost always a male (more precisely, among this group there are 30 males compared to six females).³ Among families with more children, the ratio of males to females is relatively proportionate. Ring suggests that perhaps firstborns were underreported and made legally invisible for inheritance reasons. A similar explanation could be applicable to Florence in the Late Middle Ages: many female children were not baptized, so as to grant visibility and precedence to male offspring. In contrast to baptisms, David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber argue that in the composition of the Florentine *catasto*, family heads were instead motivated to declare all of their children, male and female, to the authorities so as to be exempt from taxation.⁴ This observation suggests that the prevalence of males should be explained as a true lack of females due to abandonment or other acts of discrimination against female children (Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1985).⁵

How then can this data be reconciled with that from the necropolises? We now turn to some hypotheses.

Hypotheses on the Invisibility of Females in Cemeteries

To begin with, it is possible to demonstrate that the lack of female skeletons is not related to methodological issues of anthropological analysis.

Hypothetically, females might not have been identified in the early medieval Italian sample if sexual dimorphism was low, or if sexual traits visible on the skeletons did not differ significantly between males and females. When this occurs, female skeletons can appear rather masculine and may mistakenly be interpreted as males.⁶ High sexual dimorphism can instead mean that female

skeletons are quite fragile, and this can cause bones to be fragmented or not properly readable. Under these conditions, women might appear to be missing from cemeteries because they are poorly preserved. In the medieval Italian cemeteries considered here, the relatively high sex ratio observed by the anthropologists does not appear to be overly influenced by the presence of poorly preserved skeletons (and hence sexually uncertain), in that the latter make up a relatively small proportion of the whole.⁷ Thus, it is possible to demonstrate that these two aspects do not influence the observed sex ratio.

An Italian scholar recently noted the lack of females in a sixth-century cemetery near Turin (Collegno) and claimed this was a consequence of barbarian warriors emigrating from northern Europe (Pejrani Baricco 2004). This hypothesis seems implausible for several reasons. First, males outnumber females in areas of Italy not affected by Lombard immigration. Second, the percentage of Lombard immigrants has been estimated at around 5–8 percent of the total population in areas where immigration was most intense, which from a demographic perspective does not significantly alter population trends (Wickham 2005). Third, if the imbalanced sex ratio were the result of male immigration, we would expect to see this disproportion only during the period of migration as opposed to later centuries as well. Fourth, the sex ratio is proportionate in other regions of Europe, such as Hungary (see below), equally affected by several waves of foreign immigration. This would suggest that the hypothesis of a connection between a lack of women and barbarian immigration should be rejected. Similarly, the hypothesis that local female migration, for instance from villages to towns, may have created an unequal gender distribution across different settlements is not supported by our data (Devroey 1981, 1989). Medieval towns such as Milan, Rome, and Siena present sex-ratio values as equally distorted as the countryside.⁸ More data is, however, needed to clarify this issue.

Selection factors may mean that certain cemeteries are unrepresentative of the population as a whole. For example, it is possible that some categories of women were segregated in terms of burial placement or inhumed in other places. At present this hypothesis remains purely speculative in that no cemeteries or funerary areas reserved solely for females have been found in Italy. In addition, although exclusively male cemeteries linked to monasteries have been extensively excavated⁹ only one cemetery linked to a nunnery (Santa Giulia in Brescia) has been partly excavated. Here only six graves related to the nunnery have been examined, containing one female, two males, and three individuals whose sex is undetermined.¹⁰ It is unlikely that females are missing from funerary evidence due to being buried near monasteries. In fact, the available literature suggests that, at least during the Early Middle Ages, female nunneries were less common than male monasteries.¹¹

It could be also hypothesized that females did not receive public funerals for social or economic reasons and as such were not buried in the community

cemetery. However, while funerary segregation has been documented for children – in fact, several cemeteries dedicated solely to children have been excavated in Italy in different time periods and regions – the same does not hold true of women (Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2007; Barbiera 2008). In order to verify this hypothesis – that is women are missing from larger cemeteries because they were buried in single scattered plots or in graves within religious buildings – an investigation of sex-ratio trends in northwestern Friuli was carried out. This study examined available data on osteological remains from all types of burials, ranging from larger cemeteries to single graves connected to settlements and churches. Results show that even when all grave types are considered, males outnumber females with a sex ratio of 160 adult males per 100 adult females. One can therefore conclude that at least in this investigated area females are missing from all types of burial sites.

Moreover, Italian cemeteries are not normally organized according to gender (Barbiera 2012b) as has been observed in other regions of Europe such as Western Pannonia and the region of Metz (Halsall 2010; Barbiera 2005). As such, the hypothesis that females were buried at the edges of cemeteries and subsequently not found by archaeologists is not relevant to our data. Northern Italian cemeteries were more commonly organized into clusters of graves corresponding to kin groups or affiliates. In fact, in these cases, females are especially visible in terms of grave goods selection and deposition (Barbiera 2012b).

It is possible that females are missing due to special funerary rituals making their bodies archaeologically invisible. At present, however, the available archaeological data and written sources do not contain any evidence that would suggest such behavior. Moreover, recent work has shown that special care of dead bodies developed during Late Antiquity (Brown, 1981, 1988; Rebillard 2009). A number of scholars of this time period underline the importance of properly burying deceased loved ones, insisting that cremation was not a “humane” way of treating the dead.¹² It is therefore unlikely that precisely when Christians began paying special attention to the dead, women were not properly buried. In any case, as additional data from cemeteries becomes available, discussion of the issues presented above will become more sophisticated and precise.

If the data currently available do not lend support to hypotheses related to anthropological analyses of remains, to migration patterns, or to burial segregation, it might very well be that females are underrepresented because they died in higher numbers compared to males before reaching adulthood. In what follows we consider this hypothesis in some detail.

Exposure, Oblation, Infanticide by Neglect

One of the challenges of examining sex ratios of the past is that archaeological data cannot provide the sex of an individual who died before the age of 16/18 years, and hence we cannot know if females more commonly died in their first months of life or instead towards adolescence. In the case of the latter, one might surmise that females were encouraged to marry very young and then died young due to maternal mortality risks. If, on the one hand, sources seem to consistently show that at least in the Early Middle Ages there was a relatively marked difference in age between husband and wife, it is, on the other hand, unclear whether women married in very early adolescence. The Lombard laws, for example, banned girls from getting married before the age of 12 (Liutprandi Leges 12), but it is difficult to know how frequently young women entered marriage in early adolescence. In addition, while there is little doubt that girls married quite early during Roman times and in Tuscany during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,¹³ no data indicates a decline in age at marriage during the Early Middle Ages. If anything, recent studies instead suggest that the Italian Early Middle Ages were characterized by a decline in fertility, in part due to a rising age of marriage among young women (Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2007; Giovannini 2001; Lo Cascio and Malanima 2005).

Various scholars have, on different occasions, interpreted the underrepresentation of females in certain cemeteries as a sign of female infanticide (Giovannini 2001; Wicker 1998; Halsall 1996). Preliminary research using written sources on Italy does not seem to support this argument, although further study is needed.¹⁴ Harris, for example, has shown that infant or child exposure, often resulting in death, was widespread in many areas of the Roman Empire (Harris, 1982, 1994; Shaw 2001). Exposure has also been documented during and following the Middle Ages (Boswell 1991; De Jong, 1996). Attempts to ban exposure can be observed in both secular and canon laws, reflecting, on the one hand, changing attitudes towards this practice (tolerated more during Roman times) and, on the other hand, the persistence of this practice during the medieval period, given the continued need to legally condemn it (Boswell 1991). In addition, beginning in the fourth century CE, the Church started regulating child abandonment in the form of oblation. Parents were encouraged to offer their children to monasteries or to abandon them in front of ecclesiastical buildings, to then be raised by the Church. This practice became increasingly frequent during the Early Middle Ages. Sometimes it was the poor, who felt forced to anonymously give away their children, but more often it involved the rich, willing to openly offer their offspring to prestigious monasteries, thus establishing powerful connections between aristocratic families and religious institutions. This practice did not, however, translate into an elimination of children, but rather their displacement. Moreover, the available evidence does

not indicate that females were more subject to abandonment than males. The scanty written sources from the early medieval period on exposure and oblation do not therefore indicate a link between the lack of women in cemeteries and female infanticide or abandonment during that time. On the contrary, the richer data extrapolated from Late Medieval and Early Modern *Status animorum* and baptism registers from Tuscany offer a different picture, indicating that exposure and infanticide were quite widespread and that females were at a greater risk than males (De Jong 1996).

Another hypothesis has been put forth to explain higher mortality among female children. It is argued that girls died more frequently than boys not because they were abandoned or killed, but because they were neglected during their first years of life (or even during their first months), experienced unequal resource allocation and hygienic care, and as such were more exposed and vulnerable to numerous childhood diseases. Hints of such conditions come from the polyptych of Farfa, where, as observed above, the recorded sex ratio among children is clearly unbalanced towards males.

It is possible that young girls were rendered legally invisible for reasons of inheritance. In fact, during antiquity as well as the Early Middle Ages, inheritance on the Italian peninsula was by law equally divided between sons and daughters. One common reaction to this regulation may have been efforts on the part of families to seek an advantage for their sons, particularly firstborns, so as not to divide family patrimony (Smith 2005). While documentation from Farfa seems to support the idea that female children were neglected in comparison to their male counterparts, the sex ratio of adults registered in the polyptych is generally balanced. This of course contradicts data from the cemeteries, suggesting that while it is likely that peasant families in Farfa did not always report their daughters, they also did not let them die. Unfortunately, this extremely subtle source is the only one of its type available in Italy. Later data from Florentine registries (*catasto*) offer a more complex picture, where, as mentioned above, distorted male and female registration influenced by the rules of taxation and infanticide by neglect concurred in making them invisible (Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1985).

Research on alimentary distribution and the health of children through the pathological study of bones could prove informative, but also here data at our disposal is scarce. For example, enamel hypoplasia of teeth corresponds to arrested episodes of amelogenesis due to nutritional stress or illness afflicting the individual during the period of tooth formation, from intrauterine life up to about seven years of age (Bedini 1991). Hypoplasia can be observed on the tooth in the form of a distinct spot or diffuse streaks or cloudy opacities on all teeth. Because teeth do not change over the life course, it is possible to observe alterations in the former at any age. In addition, based on the position of the hypoplasia defect on the tooth, it is possible to calculate the age at which it formed (Canci and Minozzi 2005). It is thus possible to ask, on the

basis of the presence or absence of enamel hypoplasia and – especially – the age of formation, whether in the communities under examination children experienced nutritional stress. Moreover, if such stress was linked to weaning, at around what age did this occur? Hypoplasia was also observed in many of the necropolises included in the sample under consideration, although study of its incidence by juxtaposing males with females has been carried out in only nine cemeteries dating from the first to the sixteenth century. This data suggests that the percentage of individuals affected by hypoplasia declined dramatically in the early medieval cemeteries.¹⁵ In addition, females were less affected than males in all of the cemeteries considered with only one exception (the cemetery of Misciano, dating from the seventh to the tenth century, see Barbiera 2012a). Although it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions from this limited evidence, two rough contrasting assumptions can be drawn: female children were stronger or might have been better fed than males, or on the contrary, higher mortality of female children within the first months of life, when the crowns of permanent teeth had not yet grown, might have led to selection for stronger girls, who were later less affected by hypoplasia. In one cemetery, dating to the fourth century (in Galliciano, Latium), scholars observed hypoplasia formation as early as 2.7 years of age for females and 3.4 years for males, suggesting that males may have been breastfed longer than females. Clearly more data is needed on this matter, both for Italy and other areas.

It is also possible that a variety of factors concurrently determined the invisibility of females in the cemeteries under investigation. In a recent study focusing on the underrepresentation of female newborns in China between 1981 and 1989, Johansson and Nygren persuasively show that infant girls were missing from live birth samples in part because they were given up for adoption and in part due to infanticide (Johansson and Nygren 1991). Both these practices reflect the lower status attributed to females in this society. Although contemporary China and Medieval Central Europe are extremely different, as are the samples under observation (live births in China and cemeteries in medieval Central Europe), it should not be excluded that similar mechanisms may have played a role in determining the unbalanced sex ratio.

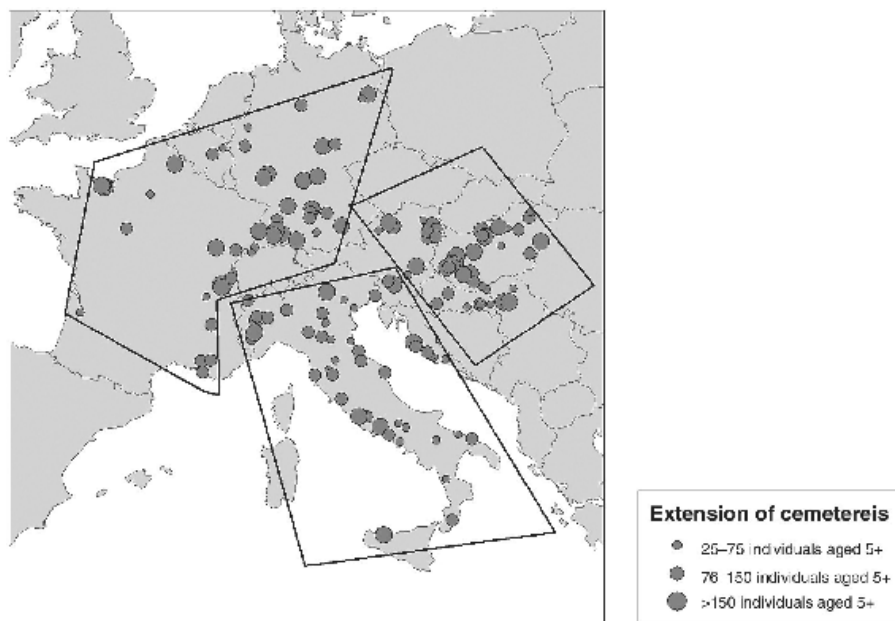
Another important point to note is that mortality trends in Italy show higher values of $d = D5-19/D5+$ ($D5-19$ equals the number of skeletons of individuals estimated to be aged 5–19 years and $D5+$ the number of skeletons over the age of five) in cemeteries dating to the period between the sixth and ninth centuries, in contrast to lower values of d found in earlier and later cemeteries (Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2009). This means that in the early medieval Italian cemeteries where female adults are missing, the number of buried individuals between the ages of five and 19 is higher compared to earlier and later periods. This value could be attributed to an increase in mortality among younger individuals and/or a very young population structure

(Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2009).¹⁶ Is there a relationship between the d and sex-ratio values? And more generally, what sex-ratio values are found in other regions of Europe? And the d values? How do they relate to one another?

A Meta-analysis of European Cemeteries: Data, Samples, and Results

In light of the above data and hypotheses, we launched a new project with the aim of collecting data from cemeteries located in different parts of Europe.¹⁷ The goal was to observe the d values and adult sex ratios that characterized areas outside of Italy and to determine whether there is a relationship between the two that would help to interpret the invisibility of females observed in Italy.

To this end we selected a sample area (see [Map 15.1](#)) that includes north-central Europe, in particular the territories occupied by present day Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Italy.¹⁸



Map 15.1 Investigated sites.

Before collecting the data, we established several selection criteria for the inclusion of sites in our sample. More specifically, we considered only

cemeteries with more than 40 individuals aged 5+,¹⁹ excluding those where more than 20 per cent of adult skeletons were of unknown sex, and those where SR_{20+} was less than 0.5 and more than 2. In addition, we include only those sites that have a final d value between 0.15 and 0.30. We ultimately collected data for about 150 sites, including a total of 21,744 individuals aged 5+. Although the sample is quite broad and allows us to draw reliable conclusions, [Map 15.1](#) shows that some areas such as central France, Belgium, and the Netherlands are poorly represented due to a lack of available data.

In order to organize our data and allow for comparisons, we divided the material into chronological and territorial groups. These are of course arbitrary; the selected sample area is quite extensive and experienced radical and repeated social and political change from Roman times to the Late Middle Ages. Moreover, chronological dates may reflect various degrees of change in different regions. With these limits in mind, we grouped together cemeteries from the Roman times and Late Antiquity, that is from the first to the fifth century CE. We included cemeteries from the sixth to the ninth century in the same group due to the relatively high d values found in Italy during this period and the desire to compare this value to those of other regions of Europe during this same time span. Finally, we grouped cemeteries dating between the tenth and thirteenth centuries together, or the period preceding the Black Death, and then those cemeteries dating to the period following the plague, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. As to the selection of regions, we distinguished between a Mediterranean area (Italy, Dalmatia and western Slovenia);²⁰ a northwestern area (Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany and Switzerland) annexed into the Carolingian kingdom; and a central-eastern area (eastern Austria,²¹ Hungary, northeast Croatia, eastern Slovenia and northwest Serbia) settled by the Avars and Slavs (see [Map 15.1](#)). It should, in any case, be kept in mind that shifting political borders may have meant very little in terms of population trends and standards of living. Nonetheless, we observe that cemetery data is relatively homogeneous within each of these three distinct macro areas.

Organizing the data in this fashion (see [Figure 15.2](#)) means we have at least 1,000 individuals over the age of five for each chronological period in each selected region, the only exception being the period after the fourteenth century, which due to the low number of individuals was excluded from this study. The best-represented area is northwestern Europe between the sixth and the ninth century (6,400 individuals), thanks to extensive and well-documented material excavated and published in contemporary Germany.

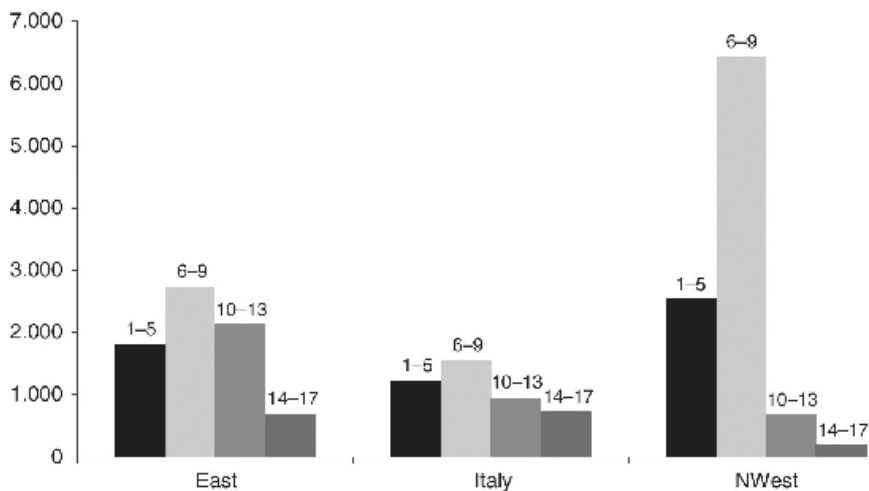


Figure 15.2 Number of deaths aged 5+ (total 21,744) in the European sample.

In the Appendix we show that when youth mortality is very high, the death sex ratio over age 20 M/F_{20+} tells us little about the level of M/F_{0-19} . On the contrary, if youth mortality is relatively low, high levels of M/F_{20+} actually do correspond to strong discrimination against female children. In other words, if the risk of dying before the age of 20 is less than 70 percent a high death sex ratio M/F_{20+} corresponds to a low death sex ratio M/F_{0-19} , which can be interpreted as a supramortality of female children and young women.

From this result, it is possible to contextualize gender differences during the Italian Middle Ages from a European perspective (Table 15.1). Table 15.1a shows that the death sex ratio M/F_{20+} is clearly higher than one only during the Italian Early and Late Middle Ages (Figure 15.3). The same result is depicted in the maps of the death sex ratio M/F_{20+} for the three periods under consideration (see Map 15.2).

Table 15.1 Death sex ratio and mortality in Europe during the first to the thirteenth centuries. Data on about 150 necropolises and 21,744 individuals aged 5+.

	<i>Late Antiquity (1–5)</i>	<i>Early Middle Ages (6–9)</i>	<i>Late Middle Ages (10–13)</i>
(a) Death sex ratio M/F_{20+}			
East	1.071	1.007	1.076
Italy	1.088	1.307	1.438
NW	0.994	1.037	1.100
(b) $d = D_{5-19}/D_{5+}$			
East	0.231	0.191	0.223
Italy	0.161	0.198	0.161
NW	0.147	0.178	0.227

(c) Estimation of the probability of dying before age 20

East	0.71	0.62	0.70
Italy	0.54	0.63	0.55
NW	0.54	0.60	0.68

(d) Estimation of death sex ratio M/
F₀₋₁₉

East	1.042	1.077	1.039
Italy	1.019	0.924	0.815
NW	1.101	1.059	1.027

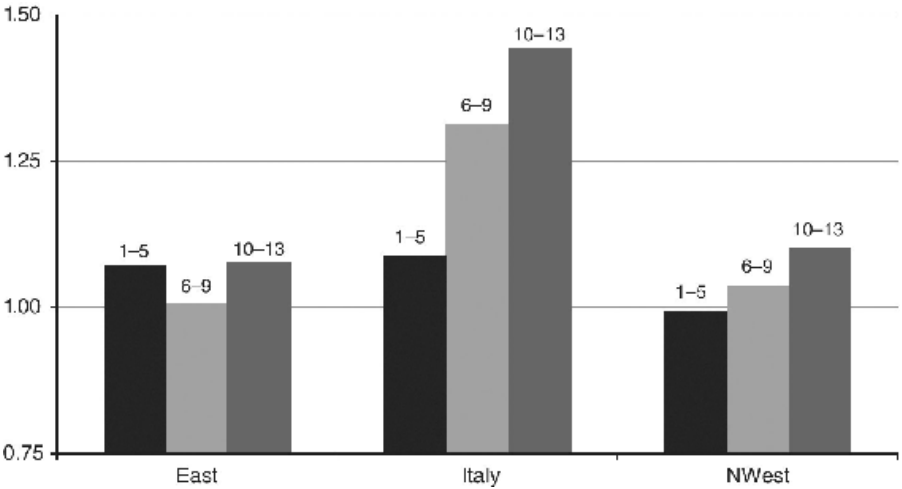
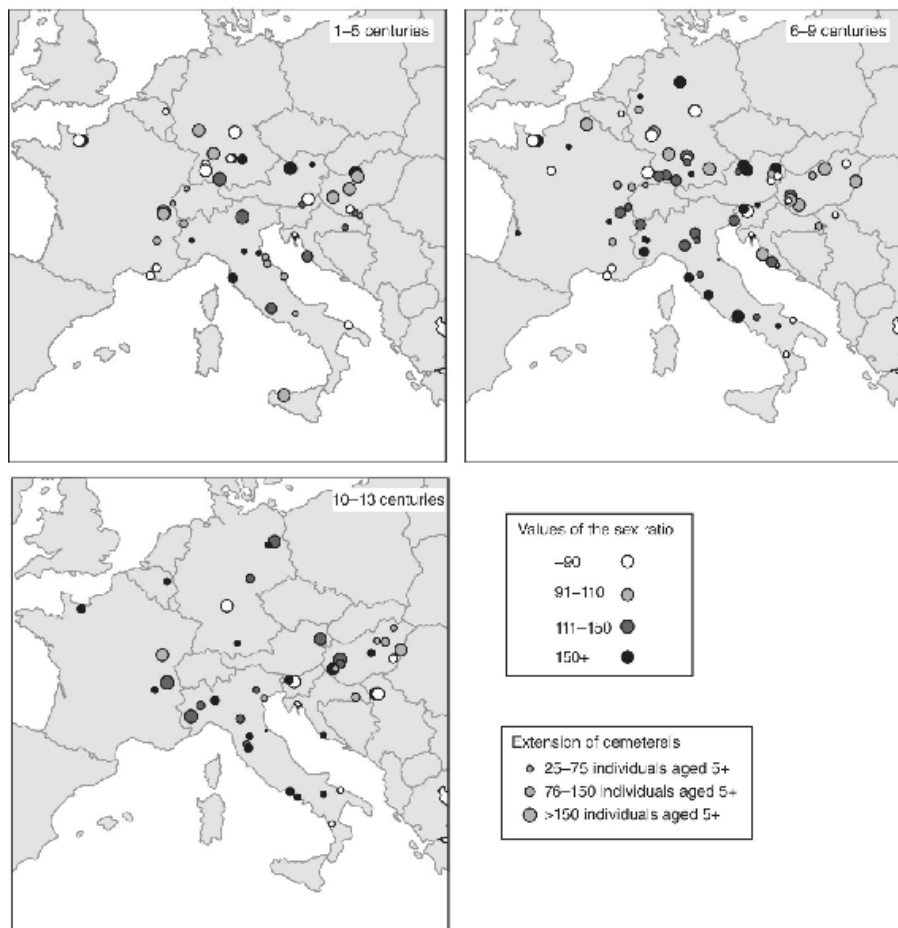


Figure 15.3 M/F sex ratio of deaths 20+ in different European regions and chronological spans.



Map 15.2 M/F death sex-ratio values for age 20+ in the sample areas according to different chronological periods.

In Europe during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the d ratio fluctuated between 0.15 and 0.23 (Table 15.1b and Figure 15.4). Using these values and standard life tables, we estimated the probability of dying before the age of 20 (Table 15.1c).²² Subsequently, we calculated the death sex ratio M/F_{0-19} for the different regions during the three time periods, assuming a stationary population (i.e. an invariable age structure and number over time) and a sex ratio at birth fixed at $M/F = 1.05$ (Table 15.1d).²³

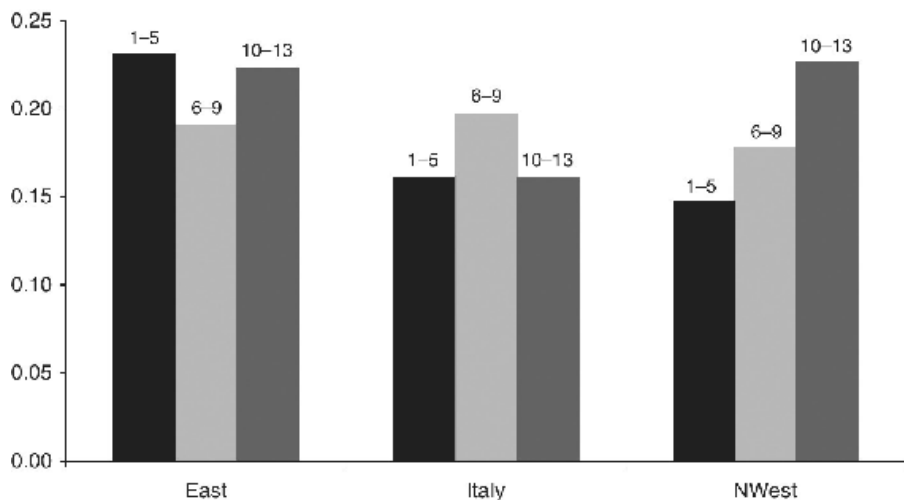


Figure 15.4 d values for different European regions and chronological spans.

Given that mortality before age 20 during the Italian Middle Ages was well under 70 percent (63 percent in the Early Middle Ages and 55 percent in the Late Middle Ages, Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2009), high levels of death sex ratio M/F_{20+} correspond to values that are considerably less than one for the death sex ratio M/F_{0-19} . In particular, according to our estimates, during the Italian Middle Ages the death sex ratio M/F_{0-19} was 0.92 between the sixth and ninth centuries and 0.81 in the tenth to thirteenth century, in contrast to the higher values (1.02) observed in Italy between the first and the fifth centuries and in all of the other European regions during the three periods considered here, where the death sex ratio M/F_{0-19} fluctuated between 1.01 and 1.10, values entirely compatible with identical levels of mortality for male and female children, recalling that the standard sex ratio at birth is about 1.05 (Figure 15.5).

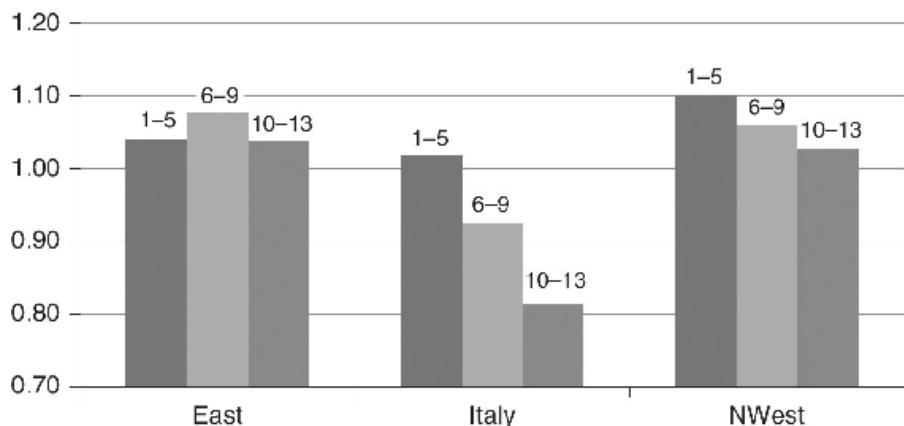


Figure 15.5 Estimation of M/F death sex-ratio ages 0–19 in different areas and chronological spans.

Data from this meta-analysis of European necropolises clearly delineate the historical dilemma at hand. Why, during the Italian Middle Ages, did female children and youth have higher mortality rates compared to their male counterparts? And why does such gender discrimination appear only in the Italian Middle Ages, and not during Roman times or in other areas of Europe?

The Italian Peculiarity: Some Hypotheses

About ten years ago, in a contribution entitled “Did Women Have a Transformation of the Roman World?” Julia Smith reflects on how the end of the Roman Empire changed the lives of women (Smith 2001; Le Jan 1995; Arjava 1996; Goody 2000). Rather than finding an answer, the author aims to highlight the lack of scientific research on this topic and raises a series of questions she felt useful for further study. A number of investigations have since been dedicated to understanding changes in marriage and the family following the end of the Roman Empire (Bougard and Feller Le Jan 2002; Bougard, La Rocca, and Le Jan 2005; Cooper 2007). Aspects such as the shift from an agnatic kinship system (characteristic of Roman times) to a cognatic system, the loss of power of the *paterfamilias*, and the forming of a dowry system that no longer involved solely the bride’s family but also that of the groom, together led to a more significant role of women in marital politics, making the latter “socially useful” in establishing links between different familial clans (Cooper 2007; Wood 2005; Goetz 2005; Halsall 2010; Mazo Karras 2006; Nathan and Laes, Voulanto, this volume). Similarly, in the context of the necropolises, we observe that women receive rich feminine grave goods in greater numbers than men, and this is especially true in Italy, precisely where women are so scarcely represented (Barbiera 2012b). How can female underrepresentation be reconciled with the fact that commemorative practices make them more visible? And how to explain the hypothesis of discrimination against female children if women appeared, precisely in this time period, to take on a more important role in marital politics? And above all, what made Italy distinct from the rest of Europe after the end of the Roman Empire?

It is quite difficult to say: sources for Italy are scarce for this time period making conjectures a challenge. If, on the one hand, early medieval documentation relative to the aristocratic classes shows that women took on a more important role in marital politics with respect to Roman times, on the other hand the marriage of a daughter was not always hoped for or necessarily considered advantageous. While Teodorico and Desiderio used the marriages of their daughters to weave ties and alliances with other foreign kings,

Charlemagne preferred not to marry off his daughters, thus avoiding the arrival of unwelcome heirs. The latter, in a phase of delicate assertion of Carolingian power, could have had a destabilizing effect if in conflict with the line of male descendants (La Rocca 2010; Nelson 1998; Joy 2010). In aristocratic contexts daughters were thus “living treasures,” to use an apt expression by Pauline Stafford (2001), that could be spent or treasured accordingly.

If, in fact, changes in marriage in Late Antiquity resulted in a greater weight of women in the formation of new family groups, these same changes also meant (in contrast to Roman times) that women were no longer under the control and guardianship of their fathers but entered the orbit of the groom’s family. During the late Empire the most widespread marriage system was that called *sine manu*, which meant that a daughter and the goods she inherited remained under the guardianship of the father, at least as long as he was alive (Treggiari 1991). In addition as Saller has shown, because of the instability of Roman marriage dowries given to daughters were not very consistent, they would have to be returned in case of divorce and did not serve the function of an alternative to female inheritance (Saller 1984). Moreover, recent studies have underlined how the power of the *paterfamilias* was not as strong in Roman times as perhaps previously thought (Arjava 1998; Saller 1999; Joy 2010) and high mortality meant that very often daughters become *sui iuris*, gaining an independent role in managing properties (Parkin 2011). As a result the properties of a married couple tended to be kept separated (Saller 1984). On the contrary, in the Early Middle Ages a wife and her goods were more often integrated into the husband’s clan, resulting in a more clear-cut detachment from the family of origin. This process was perhaps even more radical in Italy, where according to the Lombard laws the groom was requested to purchase his wife’s *mundio* (legal right), such that the father lost any power over his daughter (L. Feller 2002; G. Bühner-Thierry 2010; La Rocca 2011a; Balzaretto, 2011). However, we should not forget that, as it has been highlighted, marriage practices were quite fluid during the Middle Ages such that guardianship over a woman by her husband might have been foreseen by the law, but was not necessarily a universal practice (Mazo Karras 2012).

Simultaneously, in Late Antiquity the Church began, with increasing insistence, to back a policy against marriage between blood relatives (Goody 1983; Herlihy 1985; De Jong 1998). Different theories have been formulated to explain the reasons behind laws against incest, prohibiting marriage up to until the sixth degree of kinship. Written sources clearly testify that during the entire medieval period, faced with the prohibition of divorce, males of the high aristocracy and kings used the excuse of incest to annul their marriages to wives who had become inconvenient either because of their inability to produce heirs or due to changing political conditions. This practice of

repudiation allowed them to marry once again and made the position of wives and their families weak and unstable (Mazo Karras 2012). The sources we examined are less clear as to what extent this rule prevented marriages among the consanguineous and altered marital strategies. Anthropologists have observed that bans against marriages between blood relatives and the encouragement of exogamous marriages (external to the extended kin group) mean that women and their property necessarily leave the family of origin and go to another family (Levi-Strauss 1967; Fox 1967; Bell 1998: 187–209; Remotti 2008). This may be perceived as an opportunity to establish new ties or, in the inability or impossibility of creating advantageous marital contracts, as a loss.²⁴ Given the above, the challenge remains of understanding to what extent endogamous marriages were frequent in Roman times and how the bans against them changed the scenario of marriage alliances during the medieval period.²⁵

That the marriage of daughters was a delicate affair and not always successful in the Middle Ages is equally testified to by sources of a different nature (Smith 2005; Mazo Karras 2012). In this context, the Church was able to offer an advantageous alternative to marriage. More specifically, the establishment of monasteries on the part of the aristocracy allowed the latter to obviate the division of familial patrimony while simultaneously creating centres of power managed by the descendants of the founding family, among whom the abbot or abbess was chosen.

It should, however, be pointed out that options available to the elite were not necessarily accessible to the lower classes. Little or nothing is known about the conditions of peasant women or women from small producer families, who mostly used the necropolises spread across the territory and considered here. That which is, however, even more difficult to discern from the relatively fragmentary sources available is in what ways Italy differed with respect to the rest of Europe;²⁶ or why daughters here were seemingly less desired and thus discriminated against. One could argue that the Italy that had once been the heart of the Roman Empire experienced transformations along with the crumbling of the Empire differently and perhaps more dramatically than other territories, with the Gothic Wars and the Lombard conquest. While it is difficult to tell how these events affected women's lives, the sparse and fragmentary information available does offer some insight.

A number of scholars similarly emphasize, for example, how the Lombard laws were among the most restrictive of the Roman-barbarian codes in terms of women's actions. As mentioned above, women were, throughout their lives, under the guardianship of a male: first their father, then their husband, and finally their sons (Wickham 2005; Balzaretto, 2011; *Edictum Rothari* 2004).

Moreover, while the Lombard sovereigns seem to have wished to protect women against violence though the codes of law, they also endeavored to

control their conduct by limiting their freedom of action (Smith 2005; Wickham 2005). It is not possible to know to what extent the intent to defend the female sex was motivated by an actual desire to protect the latter in a particularly violent society or was instead an attempt to control women in order to protect the interests of male family members. Further, it is not clear to what extent legal efforts to segregate women were actually applied in real life (La Rocca 2005).

That the marriage of a woman was not always a welcome occasion is hinted at in the codes relative to women *in capillo*. As pointed out by Cristina La Rocca, unmarried women, daughters, sisters, and aunts under the guardianship of *parentes propinqui* appear frequently both in the Lombard laws and in testamentary documents. One of Astolfo's legal codes reads as follows:

while they remained unwed at home, without dowry, suffering every scarcity, they joined forces with servants. Thus, drawing inspiration from God, let us agree that if a dying Lombard leaves one or more unmarried sisters or one or more children, his sons must assess how their aunts can live without shortage, in accordance with the amount of their inheritance, so their aunts do not suffer from hunger or a lack of clothes or servants.

(*Ahistulfi Leges*, 10, in Azzara and Gasparri 2005)

In addition to suggesting a certain weight of this phenomenon, the text hints at the potential strains that a woman *in capillo* could generate within a family in terms of inheritance (La Rocca 2011b). Later, a chapter from the Canonical of Pavia of 850 encourages priests to ensure that fathers marry off their daughters:

It has come to the attention of the holy synod, from different parts, that certain fathers keep at home longer than necessary their daughters, who have reached marrying age and can wed in a sufficiently suitable manner; such that it often happens that [these daughters] experience corruption in the same paternal home. It has been reported that in some cases, impious even to tell it, that these same fathers connive with the corrupters of their daughters and make bawds out of those they have generated. The priests should therefore admonish fathers, such that they guarantee their daughter's wedding in due course and ward off the ardour of an impetuous age with the discipline of marriage.²⁷

The sources thus seem to indicate that if in some cases and contexts the marriage of a daughter could be advantageous, it could also represent a loss preferable to avoid.

Other material of interest comes from a fascinating study by Geneviève Bührer-Thierry who compares the allocation of property among brothers and sisters in Bavaria and Lucca between the eighth and ninth centuries (Bührer-Thierry 2010). The study reveals two rather different situations. In Bavaria,

sisters were often co-owners of property together with their brothers and *nepotes* (nephews), suggesting the persistence of a link between women and their family of origin. This never took place in Lucca; here women do not appear as joint owners with other family members. The author concludes that it is probable that married women maintained few links with their family of origin: “from the moment they take on a husband, it seems that women can no longer pass down anything to descendants of their own family”; it is the acquired family that manages the woman’s assets. “Unless they come from a very powerful and socially much more elevated family compared to that of the groom, the wife is ‘cut off’ from her family of origin” (Bührer-Thierry 2010).

In conclusion, data on Italian medieval necropolises are sufficiently robust to demonstrate high infant and youth female mortality rates; levels that were not, on the contrary, observed in Italy during either the Roman Empire or in Central and Eastern Europe between the first and thirteenth centuries. Understanding the causes of these differences is not a simple task. That said, high female mortality does not seem due to either statistical artefacts or to selection issues concerning data on the necropolises compared those on the general population.

Written sources support the idea that the transition from Roman to medieval times in Italy was characterized by a weakening of the *pater familiais* and – more generally – the family of origin’s control over women (throughout their lives), in part due to a widespread affirmation of exogamous marriage and laws against incest. That women in the Italian Middle Ages were a resource to their parents becomes a possibility and no longer a certainty, as was true during the Roman Empire. This shift may have been particularly pronounced in Italy – the heart of the Roman familial system – compared to Central-Eastern Europe. If, however, archaeological sources confirm higher mortality rates among young female children and youth in the Italian Middle Ages, further interpretation of this phenomenon requires a gathering of more conclusive information.

Appendix: Death Sex Ratio and Mortality Levels

Comparison of the death sex ratios in the different time periods and different regions of Europe under consideration requires a methodological premise. For the necropolises in our database, it was possible to construct the sex ratio of skeletons age 20+ (M/F_{20+}). For younger individuals, traditional anthropological analyses – or those carried out in the large majority of studies available regarding European necropolises – do not allow the sex of the deceased to be determined. Intuitively, one could say that when M/F_{20+} is

significantly greater than one – considering that the sex ratio at birth is (relatively) constant across all human populations (typically 105 male births for every 100 female births) – the risk of dying for an individual under the age of 20 should be greater among girls. Female infants and youth died in greater numbers before adulthood. This is, however, only partially true. In fact, the difference between female and male mortality at young ages is not linked solely to M/F_{20+} but also to mortality levels (of males and females taken together) during the first phases of life. When youth mortality was very high, an M/F_{20+} higher than one does not indicate discrimination against girls. If, instead, youth mortality is moderate, an M/F_{20+} higher than one indicates that during the preceding ages mortality was experienced above all by female children.

These assertions can further be understood through use of simulations that represent “extreme” cases (Table 15.2). We hypothesize 205 births, of which 105 are male and 100 are female and we observe how infant, male, and female mortality values change in relation to variations in the sex ratio after the age of 20 and in youth mortality.

Table 15.2 Four simulations of demographic dynamics in populations a and b with equivalent moderate youth mortality and differing death sex ratios M/F_{20+} and in populations b, c, and d with equivalent death sex ratios M/F_{20+} and differing youth mortality.

	<i>Births</i>	<i>Deaths 0–19</i>	<i>Deaths 20+</i>
(a) Individuals deceased before age 20: 56%			
# Males	105	60	45
# Females	100	55	45
# Total	205	115	90
Sex ratio M/F	1.050	1.091	1.000
(b) Individuals deceased before age 20: 56%			
# Males	105	45	60
# Females	100	70	30
# Total	205	115	90
Sex ratio M/F	1.050	0.643	2.000
(c) Individuals deceased before age 20: 71%			
# Males	105	65	40
# Females	100	80	20
# Total	205	145	60
Sex ratio M/F	1.050	0.813	2.000

**(d) Individuals
deceased before
age 20: 85 %**

# Males	105	85	20
# Females	100	90	10
# Total	205	175	30
Sex ratio M/F	1.050	0.944	2.000

In [Tables 15.2a](#) and [15.2b](#) youth mortality is at the same level, relatively contained for that time period (56 percent of youth died before their twentieth birthday), while the sex-ratio values differ: in fact, M/F_{20+} in [Table 15.2b](#) is double that observed in [Table 15.2a](#); in [Table 15.2a](#) the value of M/F_{0-19} is also close to one, while in [Table 15.2b](#) this same indicator is 0.643, suggesting higher mortality among female children.²⁸ Conversely, [Tables 15.2.b, c, and d](#) have the same level of M/F_{20+} , always equal to 2. However, the sex ratio among those who died young changes radically, increasingly rapidly towards values ever more closer to 1, with rising mortality. When mortality is at very high levels even for the past ([Table 15.2d](#), where the probability of dying before one's twentieth birthday equals 0.85), the sex ratio at young ages equals 0.944, indicating the absence of supramortality for girls and young women.

These results are easily generalizable. [Figure 15.6](#) shows the association between M/F_{0-19} and M/F_{20+} for four levels of the risk of dying before the age of 20. As already seen in [Table 15.2](#), when youth mortality is very high, M/F_{20+} says very little about the level of M/F_{0-19} . On the contrary, if youth mortality is relatively low, high levels of M/F_{20+} actually correspond to a strong discrimination against female children. In other words, if the risk of dying before the age of 20 is less than 70 percent, high death sex ratios M/F_{20+} correspond to low death sex ratios M/F_{0-19} , or a supramortality of female children and young women.

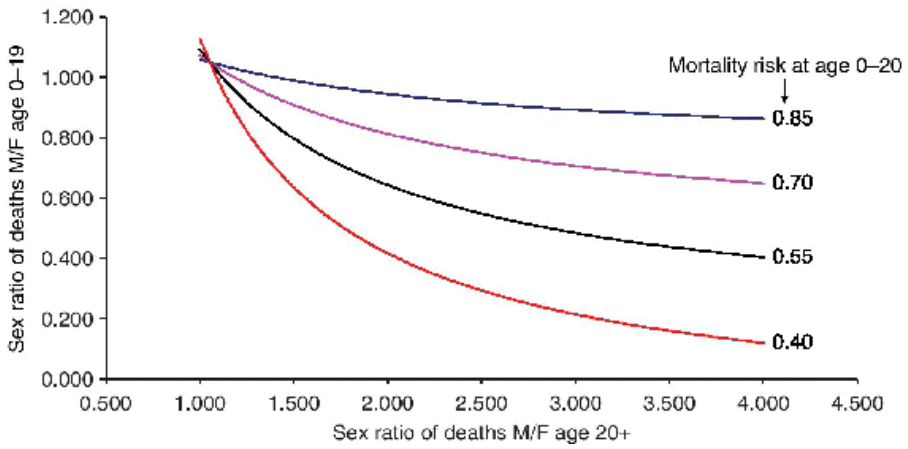


Figure 15.6 Association between sex ratio of deaths at age 0–19 and 20+ by

level of mortality at young age.

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Notes

- 1 Data from 154 necropolises dating between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages were collected for this study. The same material is employed here.
- 2 For example, a greater number of adult males were found in the following necropolises: at San Stefano (Cividale), sixth to seventh century, 16 males compared to six females, see Corrain and Capitanio 1990: 185–207; at Marine (Lecce), VII century, 16 males compared to 12 females, see Navari-Padroni 1982: 183–7; at Mesumundu (Sassari) fifth to seventh century, 13 males compared to 11 females, see Grupponi and Belcastro 1987: 81–91; at Dolinova (Cagliari), seventh century, 12 males compared to nine females, see Kiszely and Maxia 1970: 453–88; at Monte di Croce (Florence), ninth century, 22 males compared to five females, see Fornicari, Giusiani, and Vitiello 2003: 716–19; at Faella (Arezzo), thirteenth to fourteenth century, 17 males and ten females, see Galeotti and Pardini 1979: 66–82.
- 3 As recently pointed out by Laurent Feller, these data should be handled with care. To begin with, some young women are recorded as the work force in a separate manorial house. Second, given that ages were not recorded, it is possible that families composed of parents and a son were not young families but older ones whose youngest son was still unmarried and living at home. One might conclude that the high number of sons in these familial units indicates, on the one hand, that daughters worked elsewhere and, on

the other hand, that men married later than women, residing as bachelors within the paternal family. According to Ring, however, this second possibility does not justify such a pronounced disproportion in the sex ratio within these families (Feller 1994: 327–49)

- 4 This is supported by the fact that sex and age distortion in the records reflects taxation and exemption regulations of fifteenth-century Florence. For instance, at adolescent ages, when a *testatico*, or poll tax applying to heads of family began to be implemented, young men tended to be underrepresented, see Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber 1985:138–43.
- 5 Documentation relative to foundling hospitals in Florence shows a greater number of female infant admittances; likewise data on wet-nurses unmistakably shows that male infants were preferably breastfed by their mothers, while female infants more often received the care of a wet-nurse, increasing the risks of infant mortality.
- 6 Many hypotheses have been advanced to explain sexual dimorphism in humans. According to Hamilton 1982, well-nourished populations are more sexually dimorphic than malnourished ones, in that male growth is more susceptible to nutritional deficiencies during development than is female growth. The women's work hypothesis, advanced by Holden and Mace (1999) suggests that sex biased parental investments could be responsible for variation in sexual dimorphism. For example, women would be taller relative to men in a society where they contribute more to food production, as parents would invest more in their daughters such that their growth would not be compromised compared to that of boys. Touraille (2008) also recently examined differences in nutrition between males and females as determinant of sexual dimorphism. Building on previous obstetric studies, Guegan, Teriokhin and Thomas (2000) show that short maternal stature is frequently associated with serious obstetric complications (a smaller pelvis makes giving birth more difficult). It follows that in highly fecund populations, women are taller as higher mortality during parturition counter-selects short women due to their higher incidence of obstetrical complications; selective pressure for higher stature in females is high and sexual dimorphism is reduced.
- 7 For the purpose of this study only the more recently and extensively excavated cemeteries were selected, for which the proportion of undetermined individuals was fewer than 20 percent of the excavated skeletons. However even in the worst preserved cemeteries it can be shown that there is no relationship between the sex ratio values and the number of undermined individuals; for more details see Barbiera (2012).
- 8 Moreover, written sources from fourteenth-century Tuscany indicate that more males moved to towns than females; see Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber

(1985: 155–8).

- 9 These include the cemetery associated with the Monastery of S. Vincenzo al Volturno, dating to the tenth to the fifteenth centuries and the cemetery associated with the Monastery of S. Lorenzo of Aversa, dating to the tenth and twelfth centuries. These cemeteries were not included in the present study of sex ratios. An additional cemetery with a sex ratio of 118:100 was similarly excluded from this study due to its connection to male monastery of Monte di Croce, Potassieve (Florence).
- 10 A larger cemetery was excavated at S. Giulia in Brescia, but it was in use before the foundation of the monastery itself. See Brogiolo and Cuni (1988).
- 11 This fact is supported not only by archaeological data, but by written sources as well; see Veronese (1987).
- 12 In his *De cura pro mortis grenda*, Augustine is particularly clear on this matter; see also Tertullianus, *De Anima* 51.4; Minucius Felix, *Octavius* 34.10; Origenes Adamantius, *Contra Celsum*, 5.24, see also Rebillard (2009).
- 13 For the Roman period see Saller (1991), see also Shaw (1987b: 30–46), who suggests an average age at marriage for girls around late teens. For a debate on first age at marriage in Roman times, see also: Lelis, Percy, and Verstraete (2003) and Scheidel (2007: 389–402). For the late medieval period see Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber (1985) and Dalla Zuanna *et al.* (2012).
- 14 On the tacit toleration of exposure and infanticide in modern Tuscany and the difficulty of finding explicit references to this practice, see Hanlon (2003: 453–98).
- 15 Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna (2009) show that during the Early Middle Ages people were taller than during the Roman Period, likely thanks to a diet based strongly on meat. This result is in line with the low proportion of adults affected by hypoplasia.
- 16 This aspect may, in this specific historical period, be related to different outbreaks of the so-called Justinian plague that occurred in Italy and the Mediterranean between the sixth and seventh centuries, see Little (2007: 3–31). The high *d* values observed during the first two centuries of the Early Middle Ages might therefore be attributed to a “stop and go” demographic mechanism, driven by mortality crises and subsequent population recoveries with rapidly de-aging population growth.
- 17 The project entitled EWDEMA (European Women Discrimination in the Early Middle Ages) has been financed by Cariparo Foundation and

supported by the University of Padua, Department of Statistical Sciences and Department of Historical and Geographic Sciences and the Ancient World.

- 18 All of the data was interpreted and displayed using an Access database and geographical information systems software. We thank Irina Gilfanova for her invaluable help in entering and displaying our data using the GIS system and Viktor Lagutov and Eugenio Pappalardo for their helpful suggestions in using the GIS software.
- 19 Individuals aged 0–5 were not considered as there is general consensus that this age group is under-represented in cemeteries, as is similarly seen in many cemeteries dedicated solely to children, excavated in different regions of Italy and Europe (see above).
- 20 The original plan of this project was to include sites from Spain, but ultimately there were very few cemeteries that satisfied our conditions.
- 21 We did not find any sites from western Austria that met our conditions.
- 22 When using the first ten mortality levels from Coale and Demeny's West life-tables, the square of the linear correlation between d and $20q_0$ is 0.98. Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna (2009) show a similarly strict association between d and other functions of Coale and Demeny's model life-table for the four "regions" they consider.
- 23 In a stationary population, the age structure of observed deaths overlaps with the age structure of deaths in the corresponding life-table (i.e. the basic hypothesis of the so-called Halley method of building life-tables). Barbiera and Dalla Zuanna 2009 show that even if a population slowly declines or grows, as seen in the Italian Early and Late Middle Ages, this stationary hypothesis holds.
- 24 In a recent contribution, Youssef Courbage and Emmanuel Todd (2007) show that discrimination against women in the Muslim world is strongly linked to the type of familial structure in force. In societies that practice exogamy (marriage between different familial groups) and where daughters are equal to those of sons, in that when marrying a relative, daughters remain directly linked to the family of origin, and patrimony and children stay within the extended kin group.
- 25 For instance, according to Augustine marriages among cousins were not frequent during his lifetime, see Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XV.16, see also Shaw (1987a: 3–51).
- 26 On the variety of family structures present not only within the Mediterranean but also specifically within in Italy, and on the impossibility of identifying coherent marital behaviors across vast areas, see Sabine

Huebner's Introduction to this volume.

- 27 Capitolari di Ludovico II, Sinodo di Pavia, 40.9, in C. Azzara, P. Moro, *I capitolari italici. Storia e diritto della dominazione carolingia in Italia*, Rome, 1998.
- 28 This result would be analogous if in place of the sex ratio M/F_{0-19} one constructed the ratio among the probabilities of dying at age 0–19, in that the two denominators of the probabilities are, between them, constant in ratio: $(M_{0-19}/105)/(F_{0-19}/100) = (M_{0-19}/F_{0-19})/(100/105)$.

Family Forms in Later Periods of the Mediterranean

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Introduction

It is not by chance that in 2003 Pier Paolo Viazzo wondered, in his essay on family systems in Italy, what was so special about the Mediterranean. In fact, in the last decades, the Mediterranean area and especially Southern Europe have captured the attention of many scholars interested in the history of the family. Anthropologists, historical demographers, and family historians have published numerous studies on marriage patterns and family systems over many decades, in order to describe and analyze households and families of Southern Europe and more broadly in the Mediterranean. This interest is not coincidental: Southern Europe has been the focus of many scholars whose aim was to find and classify family systems according to discrete geographical regions. Such schemes, first proposed by Le Play (1871), who theorized the existence of a strict relationship between inheritance systems and family forms, looking at Southern Europe as a bridge between the Islamic world and Central Europe, have been successively developed over a century. More important contributions have included Laslett and Hajnal's taxonomy, which postulated the existence of a distinctive Mediterranean family system totally different from the one north of the Alps (Laslett 1983; Hajnal 1983); and Reher's theory (1998) on strong and weak family ties, which considered Southern Europe as the cradle of familism and strong kinship networks.

Unfortunately, following the publication of such theories, more detailed studies examining micro-level data focusing on populations located mainly across Italy, Spain, and France have demonstrated that theorizing the existence of a Mediterranean family system is not supported by the evidence. While the family systems in Mediterranean European countries were without doubt different from those in Central and Northern Europe, it was nevertheless impossible to single out a unique pattern common to all Southern Europe. Variability was more common than homogeneity in the mechanisms of family formation as well as in family forms – and not only between different countries and different geographical areas, but often within the same population as well.

Accordingly, the purpose of the first part of this chapter is to review and assess the state of research studies on Mediterranean family systems between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries. This analysis extends well beyond the traditional boundaries of Southern Europe, describing and comparing family organization and family forms in many of the countries across the entire Mediterranean region. The second part of the chapter is focused on analyzing the possible ancient roots of such different Mediterranean family systems. The persistence of specific cultural, social, and economic elements, singled out in the previous chapters of the present volume as distinctive of family systems in ancient Mediterranean populations, will be investigated with the goal of accounting for some of the intrinsic differences amongst the diverse modern Mediterranean family forms.

The Search for a Mediterranean Family System in Modern Times

When looking for the ancient roots of the Mediterranean modern family, one should first ask whether a peculiar Mediterranean family system existed, at least between the sixteenth and the nineteenth century. Peter Laslett was the first scholar to explicitly speak of a Mediterranean pattern in his morphological description of family forms in Europe. He postulated the existence of a functional relationship between age at marriage and household structure, claiming a correlation between access to marriage and the simplicity of household structure (see Huebner this volume, “Introduction”). In his contribution to *Family Forms in Historic Europe*, Laslett (1983) acknowledged the presence of four distinct models of domestic organization in Europe, including what he called the “Mediterranean family system”. This in itself was a refinement of Hajnal’s (1983) conception of geographically deterministic family patterns in Europe. He had also rejected the earlier “null hypothesis” concerning the existence of unique family organization patterns (Laslett 1972). The dominance of a nuclear family system across Europe from the Middle Age to the nineteenth century was in fact successfully challenged by extensive and solid evidence, demonstrating that in Eastern and Southern Europe a large proportion of people lived in extended and multiple family households (e.g., Klapisch 1972; Dupaquier and Jadin 1972; Levi 1973; later Collomp 1974 and Flandrin 1979). With the emergence of those new findings, Laslett thus postulated the existence of an autonomous and specific Mediterranean family system, characterized by a high proportion of complex households, patrilocality, early age at first marriage of women compared to men, low permanent celibacy rates and low remarriage rates for women. Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber’s study on the *Catasto Fiorentino* of 1427 (1978) proved essential in defining the characteristics of such a Mediterranean family

system. The authors demonstrated that a large part of rural Tuscany had, since the Middle Ages, followed a joint family system, and that this form of domestic organization was largely shaped by the region's sharecropping form of land tenure.

However, even this last attempt by Laslett to construct a coherent and general theory about family systems of Southern Europe proved problematic in the wake of micro-level studies by demographers, family historians, sociologists, and anthropologists. First, these studies demonstrated that age at marriage actually increased over time in sharecropping societies, as did household size and complexity, undermining the key functional cause of Laslett's theory; second, regional analyses of family systems proved that pre-industrial Mediterranean Europe was characterized by a variety of different family systems and not by a single, unique model of domestic organization. Italy, in particular, presented considerable variability of family systems, to such a point that David Kertzer (1991: 247) noted that "modern Italy has become a burial ground for many of the most ambitious, and well-known, theories of household and marriage systems proposed by historians, sociologists, and demographers." The findings that a nuclear family system was associated with either early age at marriage, such as is the case in most Southern Italian regions and in some Greek islands (Hionidou 1995) or with late marriage, as in Sardinia, and that Central Italy and Emilia were areas in which the joint family system dominated, largely disprove Laslett's theory of a unique Mediterranean family system.

Such conclusions are not new. The French sociologist Frédéric Le Play (1871) early on posited the existence of different regional family patterns within several Mediterranean European countries. In classifying European family systems according to inheritance patterns and post-nuptial living arrangements, he had already separated Northern-Central Italy, which featured a stem-family system, from Southern Italy, characterized by unstable (nuclear) families. Italy was not alone: he argued for differences between Southern France and the island of Corsica, as well as the Northern-Pyrenean regions of Spain and Southern Spain. Of course, Le Play's classification has suffered strong criticisms as well (Herlihy 1985; Mitterauer 1990; Brettell 1991); as Kaser (2012: 184) noted "inheritance alone could not explain the emergence of certain household patterns." Early Modern Sardinia and Sicily, for example, demonstrate different factors: a marked difference in the access to marriage and in the ratio of never-marrying to the formation of nuclear families (Barbagli 1990).

As a result, some authors have abandoned the search for homogeneous regions of Europe in terms of family systems and household structure, arguing conversely for the need for a coherent and robust theory to explain the large variability of European family forms, one based on economic, demographic, environmental, and cultural elements (Reher 1998; Viazzo 2003). Subsequent

studies documenting the existence of different family systems even within the same community (for example, villages in Central Italy, where the joint family system of sharecroppers coexisted with the strict nuclear one of daily laborers; Della Pina 1993; Doveri 2000; Manfredini and Breschi 2008) reinforce this perspective. The map of eighteenth/nineteenth-century Italy (Figure 16.1) illustrates the common and widespread variability of family forms and family systems in Southern Europe. Geographical differences between Central and Southern Italy reflect differences between Central and Northern Italy, reflecting different economic contexts, forms of land tenure, political administrations (mid-nineteenth-century Italy remained politically fragmented) and social norms.

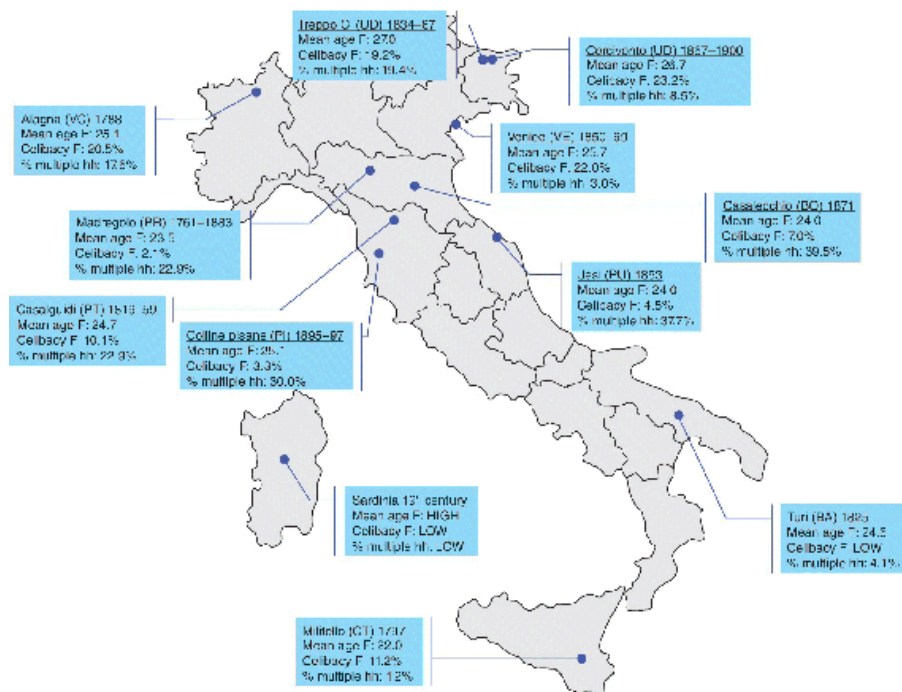


Figure 16.1 Family systems in some selected localities of Italy between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century.

Source: Viazzo 1989; Derosas et al. 2012; Manfredini and Morassi 1999; Kertzer and Hogan 1989; Doveri 1990; Rettaroli 1993; Da Molin 1995; Breschi et al. 2004.

Evident also are the differences between rural and urban populations. So, too, the environmental peculiarities of the Alpine communities, where the scarcity of land and the shortage of resources regulated the life of individuals and affected co-residency.

Taken as a whole, some scholars have thus abandoned a typological and structural definition of family systems in favor of a broader understanding of family that includes kinship relations beyond the household (Kertzer, Hogan, and Karweit 1992; Reher 1998), an idea which is again not new (Bott 1957).

Reher, for instance, individuated a clear-cut divide between the family systems of Northwestern and Southern Europe according to the age of leaving home, and if and how households supported their elderly members regardless of residency. He argued for a “strong” Mediterranean family system, which valued broad family relations, inter-generational ties and kinship – even in societies favoring nuclear households and early access to marriage. This strong system contrasted with a “weak” family system visible in Northwestern Europe, one based on self-sufficiency and individualism. While grounded on a broader and more flexible definition of the family system, Reher’s proposition for Southern Europe was still a generalization that did not account for regional variants.

It was not by chance that in 2012, Micheli posited the existence of two variants of the strong family theory in Southern Europe, organized geographically along a north-south gradient: a Continental-South family system and a Mediterranean one. The former privileged the kinship relationship within the paternal household, while the latter one was based on a federation of kindred households. This implies that in the Continental-South system the new couple stays in the parental household, whereas in the Mediterranean one a brand new independent family is formed at marriage, constituting a new element of a network of allied and kindred households. Thus, both models were characterized by strong ties; but while the Continental-South system emphasized reciprocal support among close kin, the Mediterranean system created a support network of associated households, whose members included also distant kin and occasionally even close non-relatives (friends, colleagues, etc.).

Mediterranean or Southern Europe?

Laslett’s definition of a Mediterranean family system in *Family forms in Historical Europe* obviously applied to Southern European countries only. Unfortunately, however, the terms *Mediterranean* and *Southern Europe* have become synonymous in studies on family systems following its publication (Viazzo 2003). This misinterpretation has essentially conflated the whole Mediterranean area with three countries: Italy, Spain, and France. Territorial and geographical analyses increase this conceptual problem, as some theories of family systems adopt a country-level approach while others a regional-level one. The consequence is that some areas, particularly in Italy and Spain, are alternatively considered as part of Southern or Continental Europe. This is the case, for instance, of Northern and Central Italy, Italy’s Alpine area, and some northern regions of Spain. To give an example of the nature of these problems, one alternative interpretation might be to speak of Southwestern Europe or Southern European Mediterranean, in part to include Greece in any

consideration of European family systems (Hionidou 1995).

Further problematizing this issue, Balkan states such as Albania and the former Yugoslavia, the nations of Western Asia and those of North Africa have not been considered in these theories of a distinctive Mediterranean model. This exclusion obviously reflects the absence of family studies that focus upon these regions of the Mediterranean, but it clearly presents yet another shortcoming of the theories on family systems proposed thus far.

Indeed, this is something about which scholars have been aware. Laslett assigned the Balkan countries neither to the Eastern nor to the Mediterranean family model; instead, being situated east of Hajnal's St. Petersburg-Trieste line (1983), he characterized them by a patriarchal system organized in large and complex households, as well as an early and almost universal access to marriage. We are of course faced with the same problems of overgeneralization and simplification in describing Western and Mediterranean Europe, but the Eastern family system cannot be defined as homogeneous either – in no small part because Eastern Europe is neither a geographically nor culturally homogeneous area. For example, the Zadruga family system widespread in the Balkan differs considerably from what is typical in Russia or Central Eastern Europe.

The generic Eastern model instead appears as an artificial pattern created to counter the Western one, and the few case studies upon which it was based seem to have been handpicked to support it. Recent studies on the Balkans have pointed out how family systems and family forms in these societies were more diverse than suggested by Laslett. To take two examples: age at marriage was not as early as hypothesized, even in complex households; and, although characterized by the extensive presence of joint households, the variability of family forms was far larger than expected across the region (Cerman 2001; Gruber and Pichler 2002; Plakans and Whetterell 2005).

Moreover, only in recent years have data and analysis concerning family and household structure in non-European Mediterranean countries started to accumulate. What they are beginning to indicate are societies characterized by multiple and joint family systems, deeply influenced by the Arab concept of family and kinship as well as polygamous practices. Studies on nineteenth-century Egypt and rural Anatolia have demonstrated the existence of an Eastern joint family system with complex interactions among kin and generations, and one based on marked gender role segregation. Such a system seems especially common amongst the wealthy and the notables, whose concerns focused on land fragmentation (Cuno 2005). Conversely, in Istanbul (Duben 1985) and in the nineteenth-century Syrian city of Aleppo (Okawara 2003) family systems seem closer to the imagined "Mediterranean" model. But while the complex extended household may have been widespread in the modern Middle East, it was by no means a dominant form or even the norm, especially since the advent of the twentieth century (Olmsted 2011). Thus,

just as with Southern Europe, country and regional-level typologies of family systems fail to capture the large variability of co-residential patterns elsewhere in the Mediterranean.

In Search of the Ancient Roots of Modern Mediterranean Family Systems

Many scholars who have proposed geographical and typological divisions of family systems across Europe have stressed the idea that their differentiation might stem from a long-standing pattern with distant origins. This was, for instance, Laslett's original position in his null hypothesis concerning the nuclear family system, but Reher also hypothesized that the geographical subdivision of Europe into a weak family tie model in the north and a strong one in the South might have existed for an extended period of time.

Those theories have revealed themselves as an oversimplification of a more complex situation, wherein the family's form and structure is in no small part determined by economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors, and is moreover continuously evolving in order to adapt itself to changing conditions. However, the idea that family forms might, despite considerable changes, maintain remnants of their distant past is still alive among modern family historians. Thus, might we see links and connections between modern and ancient family systems? If such a search includes asking whether ancient Roman, Greek, and Egyptian societies have left something in modern family systems of the Mediterranean in order to explain – at least in part – their difference from Northern and Central Europe, I think the answer must be yes. But if we intend such a comparison in terms of a mere typological approach, based on a taxonomy of household structures (such as the Laslett scheme), I think such a project would fail. In my opinion, three key points, quite apart from broader conceptual and historiographical concerns, would jeopardize a household typological comparison: the problem of sources, the demographic question, and the issue of the family life-cycle.

Comparison of family forms and residence patterns between modern times and ancient times cannot ignore the almost total absence of evidence that could document the way in which ancient families resided, the structure and size of the households in which they lived, and, even more problematic, the form and size of kinship beyond the household. Civil and religious censuses, as well as other archival documentation, are available for the modern era to inform researchers about household structure for a large number of European societies and, through a linkage of information among different sources, even about the structure of the local kinship beyond the household. In contrast, for antiquity, we can count only on a fragmented literary record, epigraphy

(particularly tomb inscriptions) and archaeological remains of domestic space to speculate about household structure and kinship relationships. Some useful documentation about household structure and family composition are admittedly available for Roman Egypt, where some census material survives, supplying information on individuals and families, usually more precise than those collected from other sources (Scheidel 1996). They are thus able to shed some light not only about family forms, but also about family life in Egypt (Bagnall and Frier 2006).

However, apart from specific case studies, there are objective structural and morphological difficulties in comparing the co-residential patterns of the ancient and modern Mediterranean. The information about family forms that can be drawn from such variegated documentation is often about the cultural and social meaning of the ancient family, the nature of parent-child relationships, the role of closer and distant kin, gender specific issues, system of inheritance and so on. They can only indirectly provide data about co-residential patterns. Thus, these differences present the researcher with several challenges, especially concerning the relationship between ideology and practice. As Saller and Kertzer note (1991, 5), “the historian’s sources, especially for the distant past, generally offer statements of ideals and norms rather than data on people’s actual behavior.” The real impact of family social norms and inheritance rules on everyday life is difficult to discern (Saller 1991), and how these things translated into concrete social practices.

As for demographic factors, their role is linked to the discussion above. When confronting family systems characterized by very different demographic factors, mortality patterns in particular, we may assume that the formation of specific family forms is conditioned by such constraints. According to Ruggles, demographic systems and demographic forces do shape the number and composition of kin groups, and these elements in turn define the form and structure of the familial group (Ruggles 1996). Thus, any given society’s ideal type of household may be inconsequential, because demographic circumstances constrain and condition the passage from the ideal to the concrete practice of family formation and family form. Some scholars studying modern and pre-modern families support this perspective, especially in those societies where high mortality levels were present (Levy 1965; Berkner 1975; Ruggles 1987), although others criticized this position (Wachter, Hammel, and Laslett 1978; Kertzer 1989). However, if we are confronted with two mortality patterns such as those typical of modern Southern Europe and the ancient Roman Empire, with life expectancies at birth around 35 and 21 years respectively (Stone Potter 1999), it is hard to reject the impact of such demographic factors when looking at the ancient family. It substantially reduces the number of kin – the very young and the elderly in particular – making the formation of multigenerational households rarer. Such households were less likely to be formed, limiting household

structure not only vertically but also horizontally, reducing by far the number of surviving siblings and likely altering the sex ratio of surviving offspring – and by extension, posing further problems in terms of inheritance transmission.

Finally, there is the issue of family life-cycle. In the last decade, the approach to family systems based on morphological and typological classifications of household has lost importance in favor of family life-cycle analyses. The consideration that families and households follow a course characterized by continuous changes in size and structure according to changing situations at the individual, family, and communal level has gained prominence in family studies, requiring a shift from a static to a dynamic analysis of the family life-course. Such studies of course can be connected to the analysis of individual life-histories (Hareven 1978; Manfredini and Breschi 2013). Life-course events of household members determine and shape family life-cycles. Deaths, births, marriages as well as arrivals and departures from the household all shape the composition and structure of the family group over time. For instance, a stem family headed by a widowed parent might become nuclear if such a parent dies before one of his/her grandchildren marries. Or a nuclear household might transform into a multiple one if the old parental couple were to join their son's family. Thus, mortality crisis and selective emigration of single members, fusion or fission of family groups, as well as nuclear reincorporation behaviors – in which frail households (one parent households, families formed only by an old-age couple, solitaries, etc.) joined with others in order to find help and support – are all mechanisms through which households could change and modify themselves (Kertzer 1995; Ruggles 2009). For these reasons, a cross-sectional examination based on a typological classification of household structures has difficulty accounting for these changes over the family life-course, allowing only for a snapshot of household composition at any given time. On the other hand, a family life-cycle approach allows a more precise and comprehensive description of the family system. The gap between contemporary studies on modern family systems and ancient ones is still far from being filled, despite some recent attempts to connect individual life-histories with the family life-course in the Roman world (Parkin 2010).

Thus, as mentioned above, for comparative purposes it is preferable to look at the cultural and socioeconomic elements of family systems rather than typological patterns of co-residentiality. Accordingly, I will suggest some key points that in my opinion could link the family of ancient Mediterranean societies to those typical of the modern world.

First, we have to distinguish between the Arab and Islamic world (not always synonymous) and European societies, and that they develop from different traditions. It is undeniable that on both the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, family systems were, following Reher's definition,

generally characterized by strong family ties. While there were important points of contact and cross-cultural influence, they differed on a key point: the acceptance of polygamy, and more specifically polygyny (the practice of men taking multiple wives). Jack Goody (1990) argued that in that respect, all forms of family systems in Europe, irrespective of variations and how we might characterize them are based on monogamy, a key difference from the model existing in the Arab and Middle Eastern world. Although practiced in early Greece, especially among the elites, and although in the early Roman society some forms of polygyny were practiced but not legally admitted, the Christianization of the Roman world helped to create the definitive achievement of monogamy (Scheidel 2009). Thus, while in most Mediterranean societies strong family ties systems were the norm, they functioned differently in polygamous Islamic societies and the monogamous societies of Southern Europe.

Whether expressed through large and complex households (as in the joint and stem-family systems widespread across the Mediterranean basin) or through federations of kindred nuclear households (as in some areas of Southern Europe), monogamy dominated many European Mediterranean societies. In both these complex and federated households, it is the embedded circles of family members, kin and relations to take care of the weakest members – namely children and the elderly – that best distinguishes the region. A social network of alliances, reciprocal solidarity, and collaboration among kin (and, sometimes, close non-relatives) was much stronger in Southern than in Central and Northern Europe.

The origins of this dichotomy of weak family ties in Central/Northern Europe and strong family ties in Southern/Mediterranean Europe, according to Reher, finds its origins in the later Roman Empire. On the one hand, Roman, Christianized family forms fused with early Germanic moral and ethical values to create the nuclear conjugal family in the north. On the other, family systems in Southern Europe remained anchored to Roman law and Roman family ideals, albeit modified by a new Christian ideology. The traditional Roman *familia* has been describe, based mostly on law, as a typical patriarchal family in which the household head (*paterfamilias*) had considerable authority over the other family members, and whose authority lasted until his death. Inheritance was through the male line (agnatic inheritance), and at the death of the *paterfamilias* all the sons and daughters became legally independent (*sui iuris*). Upon marriage, daughters had to leave their household, passing from father's authority to their husband's, while sons stayed within the parental household after marriage (post-marital patrilocality). It is true that many have challenged the dominant place of the multigenerational Roman *familia* in more recent studies, arguing for the idea of an evolution of the traditional "joint" Roman family towards one basically nuclear and one where the authority of the *paterfamilias* was considerably less

pervasive (notably Saller and Shaw 1984; cf. Martin 1996 and Huebner 2010). But it is significant and indeed fascinating that the model of the large patriarchal Roman family resembles quite closely that of sharecroppers of Central Italy of the nineteenth century and, more generally, the Southern European stem-family system described by Le Play. These similarities would suggest that strong family ties deeply centered on paternal authority and the paternal household maintained characteristics typical of ancient Roman families, and whose members were tied to one another by inter-generational obligations of reciprocal solidarity and mutual aid.

Conclusions

The variability of family systems and family forms is probably the main social and anthropological characteristic of Mediterranean societies from the Middle Ages onward, but also present in the ancient populations of the area. Plenty of studies have now demonstrated deep differences at any geographical and socioeconomic level, an important reality when attempting theorization of family systems and forms based primarily on rigid morphological and topological classifications of household structure. Micro-level analyses have in fact highlighted the plasticity and the incredible capacity of the family group to adapt to changing situations and to react to stressors of every kind, whether they be economic, social, environmental, or even epidemiological. Family changes over time, often transcending political regions, socioeconomic groups, and demographic factors, require the student of the Mediterranean family to frame any study within a tightly defined specific historical context.

That said, the use of a schematic classification of family systems can be of some utility, especially in comparative analyses. The efforts of historians of the ancient world to employ such schemes when analyzing their data on early family forms must be welcomed – an important reason for this volume. At the same time, social scientists and historical demographers are increasingly combining quantitative approaches with socio-anthropological interpretations and qualitative methods to investigate in greater depth and more accurately family systems in modern times. The research efforts of both ancient and modern historians of the family will hopefully create a larger common ground upon which to elaborate a common interpretative framework, able to explain both the evolution of family systems over time and across a wide geographical expanse.

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Part VI
Conclusion

Reassessing the Premodern Mediterranean Family

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The primary purpose of this volume has been to explore the nature of the so-called “Mediterranean model” by presenting a series of studies that addressed aspects of family and household in the ancient world. At the outset of this collection, Sabine Huebner noted the necessity for such a study: “family structures and household formation patterns in cross-cultural comparative perspective has received surprisingly little attention by ancient historians interested in the family” (Huebner this volume, [Chapter 1](#)). Accordingly, the assembled chapters have employed a number of different approaches, and have attempted to cover a diverse range of topics, a broad timespan (from the late Bronze Age down to Late Antiquity) and of course a wide geographical distribution covering all major regions of the Mediterranean world.

Huebner also noted several “markers” by which we might collectively address the degree to which we can speak of a series of unified or partially unified practices, customs, ideals, and habitation patterns. In the context of the contributors’ interests, it is well worth revisiting some of these markers a second time, but also consider what broader conclusions can be drawn about the constitution of the Mediterranean family in the premodern world and what new directions future research on the subject might take.

To begin with, there are initially several general considerations the authors have raised collectively that are worthy of noting. The first and in some ways most important is a *raison d’être* question: is the applicability of regionally based family types in the premodern world a viable concept given that, among other things, they have come under considerable scrutiny from modern European historians in the last three decades? As Manfredini noted in his important discussion of the early modern Mediterranean family, “the detailed studies following the publication of those family theories and schemes ... showed that none of those attempts aimed at theorizing the existence of a Mediterranean family system across Southern Europe was successful” (Manfredini this volume, [Chapter 15](#)).

Many of the studies assembled here reinforce this question about the possibility for such a model at all. Leaving aside the Mediterranean as a whole or any one sub-region of that large expanse (for example, Southern Europe) or

even in a more discrete geographical and temporal location (for example, Ptolemaic Egypt), the collective evidence suggests considerable variation in almost every aspect of family life and household. Barbiera, Castiglione and Dalla Zuana's demographic study of women in Italian gravesites from antiquity forward through the Middle Ages, to take one of the broadest studies here, documents large shifts in the nature of family composition and social expectations in the very heart of the Mediterranean (Barbiera, Castiglione, and Dalla Zuana this volume, [Chapter 15](#)). The studies of both Laes and Vuolanto and of myself have raised serious questions not only to the applicability of the Mediterranean family model amongst Late Antique elites – of whom we might expect the greatest uniformity – but also have minimized its utility. Perhaps more broadly, Haase and Steinacher's study on North Africa and my contribution looking at aristocrats in Southern Gaul and Syria have shown the limitations of trying to tie too closely a parallel between Romanization and predominating models of family constitution and behavior over the long term. Rather, local conditions (whether they be political, cultural, economic, environmental or some combination thereof) and personal circumstances seem far more important factors in understanding the nature of family and household. Recent scholarship on Late Antique family life suggests this was ubiquitous: Christel Freu, to take one recent example, challenged the accepted notion of endogamous marriage's prevalence in the Eastern Mediterranean in the late fourth and fifth century (Patlagean 1977); and instead suggests that – in the case of Egypt, at least – families pursued both exogamous and endogamous unions as personal circumstance dictated (Freu 2012).

A second broad question is related to the issue of viability of the Mediterranean family model: ought the underlying approaches and disciplinary frameworks used to construct these typologies be re-evaluated as well? There has been considerable discussion in the wider scholarship on the prominence of cultural anthropology and to a lesser degree sociology in the field of family and household history. But as Mireille Corbier observed, in a synthesis chapter similar to this one reflecting upon another collection of family studies (examining survival strategies in Late Antiquity), few of the contributors to that volume drew upon these disciplinary perspectives, methodologies, or even terminology (Corbier 2012: 393–4). Many in that publication depended on more familiar fields of classical studies – philology, legal history, critical textual analysis and the like – without the need to offer structuralist or poststructuralist conceptual frameworks born from other social sciences. In contrast, however, many in this volume have still found value in taking anthropological and sociological perspectives. For example, LaFosse's use of modern ethnography as a means for understanding social networks of non-elite women in the Roman East draws renewed focus on the role of extended kin types, fictive and real. And significantly, to return to Manfredini's chapter, he notes demography, family history, sociology, and cultural anthropology have all actually been used to undercut the theories

espoused by Laslett, Hammel, and others (Manfredini, this volume, [Chapter 16](#)).

This leads to a third issue, which focuses not on theory or methodology, but on the archaeological evidence and the use of that evidence. While literary source material has long been an important component of family historical studies in the ancient world, the surviving material culture continues to be epistemologically ambiguous for many historians of the family, particularly when it is the only data that survives. As Leslie Preston Day noted at the beginning of her contribution, “It is difficult enough to determine family structure in the ancient Mediterranean even when literary and documentary evidence exists and can be combined with material remains” (Day this volume, [Chapter 2](#)). Helmut Schwaiger echoes this sentiment by observing in his study on Hellenistic and Late Antique Ephesus that even with considerable material, conclusions tend to be frustratingly general and few. These are not new observations: Nevett discussed in some depth the problems with interpreting the archaeological data and reconstructing social relationships of the household in Classical Greece (Nevett 1999: 61–79; see also Jameson 1990a and 1990b). In spite of that *caveat*, it is clearly a truism to say that both the abundance and variety of that material make it indispensable. And in contextualizing distinct temporal and geographical loci, comparison serves not only to reconstruct a broader pattern of family composition and habitation, but also to discern what factors led to particular formations.

The problem then is as much about how that data is interpreted as the availability and nature of the data itself. Collectively, the studies in this volume that focus on the archaeological material illustrate the need for understanding household structure in the ancient Mediterranean world by depending on a variety of methodologies. This is especially significant in pre-literate or proto-literate societies, as Ayán Vila, Day and Varto have all shown in their respective contributions. But as Schweiger conversely demonstrates, having too much archaeological data—particularly from elite dwellings—creates methodological and interpretive problems of its own. More to the point, all the archaeologists here note that such exercises present broader dangers: identifying household structure purely on the material evidence and without any sort of written testimony of course can lead to misinterpretation of data; but these problems can multiply exponentially when attempting a general application of that data to a wider geographical and/or temporal expanse. Boozer, whose contribution focuses on this very problem, most eloquently when discussing the archaeology of households in Roman Egypt, perhaps offers the best thoughts in approaching archaeology and family: “Even when only partial data sets are available, a holistic approach will enable us to make the most of fragmentary data sets for exploring past population histories” (Boozer this volume, [Chapter 10](#)). That is, using broad “suites” of data, both existing and emerging, requires a constantly evolving

and interdisciplinary approach to the interpretation of material culture in order to reconstruct the Archaic, Classical and Late Antique family.

Household Structures

One of the key observations made by Laslett in his taxonomies of household, and rearticulated by Hammel, Hajnal, and others has been the notion that household structures change over time (Hammel and Laslett 1974). Just as there has been considerable discussion of family and the lifecycle, we must think in terms of family and the household cycle, where conjugal and kin groupings are in constant flux – breaking up, reforming and changing over time (Dixon 1992: 133–59; Harlow and Laurence 2002: 18–31). Schwaiger’s introductory observations about the house being a place for the family as an organizational unit to inhabit are worth keeping in mind (Schwaiger this volume, [Chapter 5](#)). Moreover, by extension, we cannot speak of an exclusivity of models, but rather the predominance of certain agglomerations of residents – kin and non-kin – in households over others. While the demographic information in the form of census records from Egypt offers statistical, if not necessarily unproblematic data, such information is not recorded elsewhere. We must thus rely on other evidence—in the case of household, particularly the archaeological.

Leslie Preston Day’s study on Vronta, Kavousi in twelfth-and-eleventh century BCE Crete (the age of “Mycenaean collapse”) is a case in point. House architecture, the assemblage of domestic artefacts and the clustering of housing “groups” all speak to the concept of familial evolution and change, where for periods of time nuclear families created clusters of kin-related networks and perhaps joint families. But these circumstances were clearly predicated on a distinct set of local and regional conditions that ended with the rise of Archaic Era communal systems of organization. The households at Vronta do not seem to represent a model of habitation on the island or the time: Day notes that at other contemporary sites on Crete, including Knossos and Sybrita/Thronos, where there seem to be similar family structures in evidence, habitation patterns were substantially different (Day does note these are tentative observations; Day this volume, [Chapter 2](#)).

More pointedly, Sabine Huebner reminds us that household structure and the physical domicile often went hand in hand. In her case study of House B in El-Kab, the archaeological and papyrological evidence illustrates that domestic buildings could be changed structurally and cosmetically to meet a series of needs in the Upper Egyptian village: family size and age, the presence of multiple families, household activities, and using shared space for

multiple purposes. Time of the day and year, gender differences and status distinctions (head of family/family, free/slave, adult/child, etc.) also had important bearing on the manipulation of domestic space. Collectively, the *ostraka* found at El-Kab and the surviving material culture permits to us understand something of the inhabitants there.

If Huebner's study shows what can be accomplished from archaeological examinations that are tightly focused in time and space, then Xurxo Ayán Vila's study of domestic architecture from tenth-to-fourth-century BCE Iberia shows the value of *longue durée* approaches to understanding the evolution of familial habitation patterns. His broad analysis of a Celtiberian civilization before Roman intervention and perhaps more significantly one that had limited contact with other cultures of the Mediterranean, reinforces the famous adage of the architect Louis Sullivan about form following function. The spread of increasingly formalized, dedicated domestic space can only have been accomplished with the movement towards sedentary, non-itinerant populations, the systematic pursuit of agriculture and the consequent rise of urbanism. The negotiation of these processes with other factors –including the size of settlements, topographic, and climactic variations in Spain, and socioeconomic distinctions – helps to further define the nature and variety of domestic dwellings and their spaces within.

It is appropriate in thinking about the nature of household and house that we consider Anna Boozer's study on houses of Roman Egypt mentioned above. She offers a theoretical framework for negotiating the variant, extant, and emerging archaeological data. Using case studies from the Fayum and the Dakhleh Oasis, she seeks to understand the interconnections between inter- and intra-domestic spaces to understand the dynamics of social contact. By considering the variables of a single house's characteristics and its relation to other houses clustered together, one can start to define social and economic organization. But perhaps more significantly, this approach provides an opportunity to incorporate new data into the framework. While Boozer's model focuses on Roman Egypt, it might easily provide a useful template for a number of geographically discrete areas and/or timespans (for example, Minoan Crete) and in turn provide greater opportunity to undertake broader regional and temporal comparisons.

Patriarchy, Patrilineality and Patrilocality

Considering the issues of male and female ages at first marriage and post-marriage residence patterns were two components that Huebner considered significant in understanding the relative plausibility of a generalized Mediterranean family and household. While there is a fair amount of published research on the topic of first marriage in the ancient world, the

subject has not been a major focus of this volume. Certainly the kind of demographic/population studies that have been prominent in Roman Egypt in particular and to a somewhat lesser degree in Roman Italy has not been treated here. Nor has there been much discussion about a third feature of the Mediterranean model: the mobility of children – specifically, taking up residence with non-kin in other households before reaching their majority.

That said, these features are certainly key when considering normative attitudes towards marriage and family, the role of the household head and the nature of living patterns of family members in a broader sense. In these areas, several authors have focused on these concerns, especially when seeing them through the lens of gender. Patriarchy, patrilineality, and patrilocality are all important components of this interest. In the case of patriarchy, I mean the ideology of male dominance as manifested in custom, religion, law, and language (see LaFosse on patriarchy, this volume, [Chapter 11](#)). These include attitudes concerning the husband and father, the relative “value” of male and female children, the relative status of agnatic and cognatic kin, and so on. Patrilineality and patrilocality can be understood to extend from the social constructions of patriarchy and in turn help to refine its ideological parameters. The practice of patrilocal habitation is somewhat more complex and nuanced, but generally, such behavior in much of the premodern Mediterranean has been accepted as a cultural norm. Patrilineal practices, particularly in laws of inheritance and status of persons, have been much discussed amongst ancient family historians (Ayán Vila, this volume, [Chapter 8](#)). These three “p’s” then tie in quite directly to theories of family and household types.

The ideology of patriarchy is not unique to the Mediterranean world, and it is perhaps not surprising that it is a feature with considerable presence in almost all cultures of this large region – and indeed well beyond. The importance of agnatic kin over cognatic in custom and law, for example, is an often pointed to feature of patriarchal societies. Certainly, inheritance patterns in Rome (in cases of intestacy) and a number of Greek city-states favored the husband’s family. True, there is perhaps a broad cultural understanding of that preference. For example, Fiona McHardy in her examination of the Orestes cycle accepts, even as she challenges, expectations that sons, brothers and fathers as the primary agents responsible for exacting vengeance in cases of bloodguilt (although see the next section of this chapter, “Extended family”). Many of the studies here, however, seem to minimize this distinction between a father’s and mother’s relations. McHardy, Laes, and Vuolanto, Barbeira *et al.*, and I have all offered a number of counter-examples to this general preference of a male’s kin, showing that there were both practical and customary reasons for such exceptions.

The significance of patrilocal marriage patterns is another prominent feature, an issue that Mona Tokarek LaFosse’s contribution on non-elite women in the

Eastern Mediterranean cities of the Roman Empire treats in some depth. Instead of simply discussing its prevalence (see also Laes and Vuolanto, this volume [Chapter 7](#))—and she suggests the possibility of fairly widespread neolocal practices among both rich and poor – LaFosse considers the impact of patrilocal residence upon women. In such arrangements, the importance of ideational (rather than physical) separation of men and women in social contexts helped to create alternative systems of support also based on gender. Mothers and daughters-in-law are the most obvious, although most confrontational connection in that system, but it also offered avenues for creating communal female support.

The role of patrilineal descent, a third feature which has received relatively little treatment in this collection, is somewhat ambiguous and perhaps merits closer attention. The concept of descent itself raises several questions, as Varto notes, even as she implicitly accepts patrilineality as important in Archaic Greek burial sites and perhaps by extension Greeks themselves (Varto, this volume, [Chapter 5](#)). On the other hand, the place of the maternal and paternal lines amongst Late Antique elites was often predicated on their relative notoriety ([Chapters 13 and 14](#), this volume). Onomastic studies have also shown, again among elites, an interest in the maternal and the matrilineal (Salway 1994: *passim*). Thus, as an organizational principle, reflected perhaps best in law, the patrilineal may have been ubiquitous. But as a cultural norm, its value was often mediated by the needs of a family (and its constituent members) each generation.

Extended Family

Another important component discussed in many of the chapters of this volume deals with the boundaries of what constituted family. Indeed, the significance of the extended, often multi-generational kin groups is a topic of some controversy – its significance in the ancient world probably most famously minimized by Richard Saller and Brent Shaw (Saller and Shaw 1984). A number of the contributors here have focused on the importance of notions and definitions of extended family networks both within and outside the household; they demonstrate that the prominence and place of the nuclear family has overshadowed its importance in a number of cultures across the Mediterranean world and over an extended period of time. Early scholarship on this topic – perhaps most famously by LePlay and Engels – emphasized the prominence of extended kin in defining family and household habitation patterns in pre-industrialized Europe (LePlay 1879; Engels 1884).

McHardy's discussion of revenge in classical Athenian drama is an excellent case in point. The place of agnates in seeking blood vengeance appears to have been an important responsibility (as we discussed above), but it was by

no means limited to them. Cognates and affines (and “friends” through the social obligations of *xenia*) might also be reasonably expected to take place in righting murder on their own. Indeed, McHardy stresses the notion of collective responsibility, where nuclear and extended relations work together to exact justice. Whether mythology refracted through the lens of Athenian tragedy reflected broader societal values is more complicated, but certainly these moral *exempla* could have resonance in legal and other contexts.

When looking at extended family outside the context of myth and its narratology, Christian Laes and Ville Vuolanto examine how household and extended family – especially grandparents and avuncular relatives – formed a core social network for patronage and friendship. Looking at a single family over a period of five generations, from the fourth to sixth centuries CE, their study points to the endurance of traditional concepts of family in southern Gaul, in spite of enormous political, economic and cultural changes. Indeed, those changes perhaps focused elites on family more, but what of behavior, discourse, attitudes? The impacts of Christianity and the establishment of autonomous Germanic states were subordinated to the needs and concerns of the elite. Indeed, the authors suggest that aristocratic Roman identity (*romanitas* – a term admittedly used sparingly in Late Antiquity), although an ideology that shifted over time, was a factor in their endurance.

Yet my own contribution, which has included looking at some of the same individuals (Ausonius and his relatives), has focused on the Romanization of the Empire’s elite differently: as a possible way in which to conceive of a Mediterranean family model. Extended kin played a prominent role amongst the families in different regions, and concepts of obligation and responsibility to relations outside the nuclear family/household were generally assumed and accepted. Members of an extended family could also of course take advantage of such networks. Function aside, however, there were few cultural paradigms for defining family in an extended form, nor any clear interpretation of what responsibility and obligation entailed. The language of immediate family to describe these interactions perhaps best exemplifies this ambiguity, but also suggest that such ambiguity may be due to modern and thus anachronistic distinctions. Personal circumstance often dictated these things in the extended family, just as in the nuclear family/household.

David Noy’s consideration of migrants to Delos in the second century BCE and of Roman soldiers migrating to Rome in the third century CE demonstrates the significance of the epigraphy in understanding the elasticity of family. By virtue of their separation from home, the importance placed on family ties, extended as well as nuclear, were key for maintaining ethnic and geographical identity. Those connections might transcend occupation or circumstance, although Noy’s argument raises interesting questions about the distinctions between kin and place of origin. It is significant, too, because Noy’s study takes the issue out of the realm of elites. Whether these examples

are representative of a set of survival strategies applicable to the broader non-elite population is well worth exploring further.

For that reason, we should also not overlook more flexible ways to view and understand extended family. Peter Keegan has demonstrated the plasticity of *familia* in terms of its function in the Roman household, focusing on the *vigiles* of Ostia and the *Transtiberim* as part of the *domus Caesaris*. Too often, *familia* fails to evoke its broader meanings outside of “real” family; thus Keegan offers a useful definition in his conclusion (Keegan, this volume Chapter 6)

Persons who inhabit a particular space (*paterfamilias*, *materfamilias*, children, relatives, slaves), the activities and practices which these persons share within that space (consumption of food and drink; shelter and sleep; leisure and work; reproduction, nurture, maturation and death), and the degree to which these shared activities become institutionalized over time (the *domus*).

He demonstrates that household formation and composition need not be kin-based or even localized, and reminds us that family in its extended form might cross legal, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. This broader framework for articulating the place of extended kin is also prominent in LaFosse’s contribution. Like Keegan, her study is valuable as it offers a glimpse into non-elite family/household networks. Drawing upon the ethnography of modern societies, she is particularly sensitive to the construction and survival of women kin groupings, made up of both fictive and non-fictive members, to negotiate the realities of patriarchy and, as discussed above, patrilocal marriage patterns. Again, function is an important component of these kin formations.

Lastly, Emily Varto in looking at the Late Archaic burial site of Vroulia has made explicit that the ability of families to express and assign importance to the extended kin was often a product of economic capacity and social prominence. This has obvious implications for several of the studies here. The idea of descent and conceptualizing family structure over many generations could serve not only as an organizational principle, but an ennobling one. Such concepts are visible in the burial remains of early Greece, but Varto also cautions us to understand that these commonly fictive genealogies should be differentiated from family and household. They created context for both, but only for the purpose of immediate social needs and expectations of “real” family – a much smaller and more concrete entity.

Future Directions

Together, the chapters assembled here have demonstrated the need for more

complex points of comparison. This is perhaps an obvious conclusion: because the Mediterranean world encompasses such a wide geographic, sociopolitical and linguistic expanse, variant models of household and family were not only likely, but almost inevitable. Even in times of relative political unity and/or cultural homogeneity (but see Nathan, this volume, [Chapter 13](#)) – most visibly in this volume, the Roman Empire – local custom undoubtedly prevailed. While “high” culture in these circumstances may have manifested an organizing principle drawn from a dominant political authority, we have in fact seen that even amongst the elite, indigenous and frequently older behaviors could and did endure. As Huebner has demonstrated, for example, pre-Ptolemaic living patterns in the household remained a norm in Roman controlled Upper Egypt well into the second century CE. That said, however, Haase and Steinacher, Huebner, Keegan, Laes and Vuolanto, and I have all accepted tacitly or explicitly that local elites were most susceptible to the impact of a “dominant” culture, and that its impact seemed to grow more pervasive the closer elites were to the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea and the centers of power.

Nor can we speak of static models in one locality. The variables that impacted upon family and household are as applicable to fixed loci as they are broader regions. This variability, however, also provides opportunities to construct a new synthesis for understanding family and household in the premodern Mediterranean region; not necessarily as a unified sphere in regards to these units of social and affective organization, but rather as a sociocultural continuum where we can focus on what factors, common or localized, helped to shape household and familial composition, the ideology of family, and the formulation of custom and law. To that end, there are several potentially quite profitable directions to pursue.

First, a continuing exploration of how a synthesis of demography and anthropology can inform our understanding of premodern families and households. Several contributors here have seen the value of an anthropological-demographic approach – notably Barbiera, Castiglione and Dalla Zuana discussed above. As more data from the material culture becomes available, as Boozer suggested, the opportunity to apply quantitative approaches with qualitative methods will grow. Monica Das Gupta predicted this conclusion almost 20 years ago, “The study of kinship systems and their interaction with demographic outcomes is one of the richest areas for substantive and theoretical work” (Das Gupta 1997: 36).

Second, interpreting family structures and systems through comparison to fictive family/households. Both Keegan and LaFosse have shown how function of household and composition of household are not only linked in one place, but also by links that paralleled extended kin networks. As the discussion about extended family above suggests, the importance of joint, stem and other forms of extra nuclear family forms invites greater attention in

the scholarship of the ancient family in general. Understanding the purpose and place of fictive kin groups – in addition to their significance in themselves – can help make manifest those things that define the nature of obligation, responsibility, and connectivity (emotional and otherwise) between members of a “real” kin group. Other methodologies, such as employing the ethnography of modern societies or Social Network Theory, may prove to be fruitful in making these connections clearer.

Third, continuing attention and development of the prosopography. Although not explicitly discussed, many of these contributions here suggest the value of the prosopography in constructing and interpreting literary, archaeological, papyrological, and epigraphic evidence in concert. While there has been considerable work done in the Late Antique and medieval periods, Archaic and Classical Greece and most of the Roman Era have received sporadic or incomplete attention. Part of this paucity of research has been circumscribed by the surviving evidence. Thus, the prosopographical data has understandably been mostly limited to secular and religious elite. Nevertheless, there is ample opportunity to expand these data. To cite a well-known example, the compilers of *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* collected, but did not publish data on individuals of curial status in the Roman world. Profitable approaches to developing the prosopography might include offering ongoing analyses with the publication of new papyrological and inscriptive evidence from individual locations. As Averil Cameron concluded in a study on its use: “... prosopography is a tool of research, not the stuff of history itself. Yet how grateful future generations will be for the immense and learned effort that has gone into these collaborative enterprises” (Cameron 2003: 17).

Fourth, making greater use of emerging databases of material culture. Archaeological data repositories such as Open Context, tDAR (the Digital Archaeological Record) and OCHRE (Online Cultural and Historical Environment) can provide historians access to new evidence, which in turn can facilitate comparative studies and also offer opportunities for new areas of investigation.¹ This volume has touched upon a number of factors that play a role in shaping all families. Understanding how these factors compare to one another and relate to each other in time and space can be aided by easier access to new evidence. While these repositories are still developing, they are becoming increasingly important and permanent fixtures in academic activity. To take the case of OCHRE, for example, over ten major ancient archaeological projects are currently employing the site to preserve, manage, and share data and publications.

The Mediterranean as a historiographical concept has a long and continuing place in many fields of study. Where historians of the family and household take it depends very much on the future methodologies they employ in exploring the factors impacting on the composition, behavior, and dynamics

of this most basic of human institutions.

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Note

- 1 Open Context focuses on the review, documentation and publication of archaeological data: <http://opencontext.org>; tDAR serves as a digital repository for archaeological data and allowing access to that data: <http://www.tdar.org/>; and OCHRE encourages the use of the Online Cultural and Historical Research environment to record, integrate, analyse, publish, and preserve cultural and historical information digitally: <https://ochre.uchicago.edu>.

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